00024392

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY-400 023.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 06 February, 2016

LIBRARY
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY

L. E. Landon

CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

	PAGE
MRS. PIOZZI	1
MADAME D'ARBLAY	33
MRS. GRANT, OF LAGGAN	66
MRS. ELIZABETH HAMILTON	98
MRS. MARY WOLLSTONECROFT GODWIN	125
MRS. RADCLIFFE	155
MISS JANE AUSTEN	174
MISS ELIZABETH SMITH	187
MRS. BRUNTON	209
MRS. HEMANS	225
MISS JANE TAYLOR	262
MISS A. M. PORTER	276
MRS. MACLEAN	304
MISS EMMA ROBERTS	333

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LITERARY LADIES

OF ENGLAND,

FROM THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE LAST CENTURY.

24392

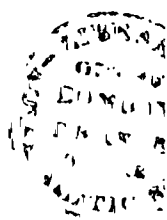
BY

MRS. ELWOOD,

AUTHORESS OF "AN OVERLAND JOURNEY TO INDIA."

IN TWO VOLS.

VOL. II.



LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,

GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1843.

928.2
Elw/mem
24392
Ref 920.

00024392

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LITERARY LADIES

OF

ENGLAND.

MRS. PIOZZI.

THE maiden name of the lady so well known in the literary world, first as Mrs. Thrale, and subsequently as Mrs. Piozzi, was Hester Lynch Salusbury. She was born on the 16th, or, according to the change of style, the 27th of January, 1740, at Bodvel, in Caernarvonshire, and was the only daughter and heiress of John Salusbury, Esq., of Bodvel and Bach-y-graig, in Wales, by his connexion, Hester Maria, who was the daughter of Sir Thomas Cotton, of Combermere, in the county of Cheshire.

Sir Thomas Salusbury, the brother of Mr. Salusbury, was well known as a civilian in Doctors' Commons, and for having been several years a judge of the High Court of Admiralty. Lady Salusbury, a daughter of Sir Henry Penrice, who had no family of her own, was particularly attached to Miss Salusbury, and being a woman of great acquirements, and acquainted with several literary characters, she took great pleasure in cultivating the abilities of her niece.

In the year 1750, Miss Salusbury accompanied her parents to London, from whence Mr. Salusbury proceeded to Halifax, in Nova Scotia, where he remained four years, during which period his daughter continued under the superintendence of her mother, who paid assiduous attention to her education.

Under the care of the learned Dr. Collyer, she attained a knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, and even attained to some proficiency in the Hebrew. She likewise soon acquired a variety of information, and a general acquaintance with literature in all its branches, which, added to her personal attractions, procured her the admiration of all who were acquainted with her.

Early in life she was distinguished as the beautiful Miss Salusbury, both in the fashionable world, of which she was so long a brilliant ornament, and also of the literary circles of the period. Her richly-stored mind, lively wit, and pleasing manners, rendered her a most delightful friend and companion, whilst her fine flow of spirits, which continued to the last, made her a general favourite in society.

When Miss Salusbury was about the age of fourteen, Hogarth was paying a visit at the house of her uncle Cotton, where she was an inmate; and one evening, turning to her, he told her he hoped she would never waste her hours nor hazard her repose in the pursuit of *gaming*. He then made a sketch of her, and informed her she should hear more from him at a future time. Soon after he showed her "The Lady's Last Stake," in which picture she is represented as a young married lady who has lost her property to a handsome officer, in the perilous occupation of deep play. "Miss Salusbury," said he, "the lady is a likeness of yourself, because I wanted a pretty subject, and wished to give a

lesson of wisdom to one who is, I trust, capable of understanding its force." This picture was painted by this renowned artist for the Earl of Charlemont; it was exhibited at the British Institution in 1814, and has been engraved in mezzotinto by Mr. Cheeseman.

When very young, and admiring a solar eclipse which occurred at the time, a medical gentleman, and a man of science, the intimate friend of her family, who was present, observed that from her general form he thought she would be long lived, and might possibly survive to witness an eclipse of the sun, which would happen when she was fourscore. Singular to say, his prediction was accomplished, and Mrs. Piozzi lived to see the remarkable eclipse which took place September 7th, 1820.

The first event which broke the uniformity of Miss Salusbury's early life was her marriage, in 1763, with Mr. Thrale, an eminent brewer, and member for Southwark. He was a worthy and amiable man, and appears to have been much attached to literature, men of letters always meeting with a hospitable reception at his house at Streatham, where for many years was almost completely domiciled the celebrated Dr. Johnson, who experienced the greatest kindness both from Mr. Thrale himself and from his lively and sprightly lady.

Mr. Thrale was eighteen years older than his wife. The following is the account Dr. Johnson gave of the rise of Mr. Thrale's father.

"He worked at six shillings a week for twenty years, in the great brewery which afterwards was his own. The proprietor of it had an only daughter, who was married to a nobleman. It was not fit that a peer should continue the business. On the old man's death, therefore, the brewery was to be sold. To find a purchaser

for so large a property was a difficult matter; and after some time, it was suggested that it would be advisable to treat with Thrale, a sensible, active, honest man, who had been employed in the house, and to transfer the whole to him for thirty thousand pounds, security being taken upon the property. This was accordingly settled. In eleven years Thrale paid the purchase money. He acquired a large fortune, and lived to be member of parliament for Southwark. But what was most remarkable was the liberality with which he used his riches. He gave his son and daughters the best education. The esteem which his good conduct procured him from the nobleman who had married his master's daughter, made him be treated with much attention; and his son, both at the school and at the University of Oxford, associated with young men of the first rank. His allowance from his father, after he left college, was splendid—no less than a thousand a year. This, in a man who had risen as old Thrale did, was a very extraordinary instance of generosity. He used to say, 'If the young dog does not find so much after I am gone as he expects, let him remember that he has had a good deal in my own time.'"

Dr. Johnson had a very sincere esteem for Mr. Thrale, as a man of excellent principles, a good scholar, well skilled in trade, of a sound understanding, and of manners such as presented the character of a plain independent English squire.

"I know no man" (he was wont to say) "who is more master of his wife and family than Thrale. If he but hold up a finger he is obeyed. It is a great mistake to suppose that she is above him in literary attainments. She is more flippant; but he has ten times her learning;

he is a regular scholar; but her learning is that of a school-boy in one of the lower forms."

Boswell observes, that "Mr. Thrale was tall, well-proportioned, and stately. As for *madam*, or *my mistress*, by which epithets Johnson used to mention Mrs. Thrale, she was short, plump, and brisk. She has herself given us a lively view of the idea which Johnson had of her person, on her appearing before him in a dark-coloured gown, 'You little creatures should never wear these sort of clothes; they are unsuitable in every way. What! have not all insects gay colours?'"

Mr. Thrale gave his wife a liberal indulgence, both in the choice of their company and in the mode of entertaining them. He understood and valued Johnson, without remission, from their first acquaintance to the day of his death.

Their intimacy commenced the year after Mr. and Mrs. Thrale were married, and so well pleased was Dr. Johnson with his new acquaintance, that he frequently repeated his visits, till at last he became, as it were, one of the family, an apartment being appropriated to his use, both in their house at Southwark, and in their villa at Streatham.

The following is Mrs. Thrale's own account of the manner in which they became acquainted with the author of "The Rambler."

"The first time I ever saw this extraordinary man was in the year 1764, when Mr. Murphy, who had long been the friend and confidential intimate of Mr. Thrale, persuaded him to wish for Johnson's conversation, extolling it in terms which that of no other person could have deserved, till we were only in doubt how to obtain

his company, and find an excuse for the invitation. The celebrity of Mr. Woodhouse, a shoemaker, whose verses were at that time the subject of common discourse, soon afforded a pretence, and Mr. Murphy brought Johnson to meet him, giving me general cautions not to be surprised at his figure, dress, or behaviour. What I recollect best of the day's talk was his earnestly recommending Addison's works to Mr. Woodhouse as a model for imitation. "Give nights and days, sir," said he, "to the study of Addison, if you mean either to be a good writer, or, what is more worth, an honest man." When I saw something like the same expression in his criticism on that author, lately published, I put him in mind of his past injunctions to the young poet, to which he replied, "That he wished the shoemaker might have remembered them as well." Mr. Johnson liked his new acquaintance so much, however, that, from that time, he dined with us on every Thursday through the winter, and, in the autumn of the next year, he followed us to Brighthelmstone, whence we were gone before his arrival; so that he was disappointed, and enraged, and wrote us a letter expressive of anger, which we were desirous to pacify, and to obtain his company again if possible. Mr. Murphy brought him back to us again very kindly, and from that time his visits grew more frequent, till, in the year 1766, his health, which he had always complained of, grew so exceedingly bad, that he could not stir out of his room in the court he inhabited for many weeks together—I think *months*. * * *

"Mr. Thrale's attentions and my own now became so acceptable to him, that he often lamented to us the

horrible condition of his mind, which he said was nearly distracted. * * *

"Mr. Thrale went away soon after, leaving me with him, and bidding me prevail on him to quit his close habitation in the court, and come to us at Streatham, where I undertook the care of his health, and had the honour and happiness of contributing to its restoration."

At the Thrales' villa at Streatham were often assembled individuals of rank and station in the world, as well as of eminence and celebrity in the literary circles of the day.

The portraits of several of these were painted for the picture gallery there, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. They were subsequently disposed of by auction in May, 1816, and the following is a list of them, which Mrs. Piozzi gave a friend in the following year, together with the purchasers, and the prices for which they sold. This is interesting, as it may be regarded as a sort of catalogue of the society which so often congregated at Streatham, to enjoy "the feast of reason, and the flow of soul."

THE STREATHAM PORTRAITS.

Lord Sandys, 36*l.* 15*s.*; Lady Downshire, his heir.

Lord Lyttleton, 43*l.* 1*s.*; Mr. Lyttleton, his son.

Mrs. Piozzi, 81*l.* 18*s.*; S. Boddington, Esq., a rich merchant.

Goldsmith, 133*l.* 7*s.*; Duke of Bedford.

Sir J. Reynolds, 128*l.* 2*s.*; R. Sharp, Esq., M.P.

Sir R. Chambers, 84*l.*; Lady Chambers, his widow.

David Garrick, 183*l.* 15*s.*; Dr. Charles Burney, Greenwich.

Baretti, 31*l.* 10*s.*; Stewart, Esq.

Dr. Burney, 84*l.*; Dr. C. Burney, of Greenwich, his son.

Edmund Burke, 252*l.*; R. Sharp, Esq., M.P.

Dr. Johnson, 378*l.*; Watson Taylor, Esq.

Mr. Murphy, 102*l.* 18*s.* was offered, but it was bought in by Mrs. Piozzi herself.

Boswell thus refers to his own first introduction to Mrs. Thrale. "I had last year (1768) the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Thrale at Dr. Johnson's one morning, and had conversation enough with her to admire her talents, and to show her that I was as Johnsonian as herself. Dr. Johnson had probably been kind enough to speak well of me, for this evening he delivered me a very polite card from Mr. Thrale and her, inviting me to Streatham. On the 6th of October I complied with this invitation, and found, at an elegant villa six miles from town, every circumstance that can make society pleasing. Johnson, though quite at home, was yet looked up to with an awe, tempered by affection, and seemed to be equally the care of his host and hostess. I rejoiced at seeing him so happy."

Though Dr. Johnson was wont occasionally to make very sharp and cutting remarks to Mrs. Thrale, which she evidently felt acutely, though her good sense and her sweet temper induced her to hear them with equanimity, yet he entertained a very high opinion of her abilities and excellence, and would sometimes pay her elegant and well-deserved eulogiums; and on one oc-

casion he observed, "she had a temper the most delightful of any woman he ever knew."

On another occasion he assured her "there was a consanguinity in their intellects; and that to hear her was to hear wit, and to see her was to see virtue."

He addressed a Latin ode to her from the Island of Skye, when there with Mr. Boswell, in 1773; and on her thirty-fifth birth day, when she was complaining to him that "nobody sent her verses because she was five-and-thirty, and Stella was fed with them till forty-six," he burst out suddenly—

"Oft in danger, yet alive,
We are come to thirty-five;
Long may better years arrive,
Better years than thirty-five.
Could philosopher contrive,
Life to stop at thirty-five,
Time his hours should never drive
O'er the bounds of thirty-five.
High to soar, and deep to dive,
Nature gives to thirty-five.
Ladies, stock and mend your hive,
Trifle not at thirty-five.
For howe'er we boast and strive,
Life declines at thirty-five;
He that ever hopes to thrive,
Must begin by thirty-five.
And all who wisely wish to thrive,
Must look on Thrale at thirty-five."

Indeed, notwithstanding his occasional ebullitions of spleen and ill temper, Dr. Johnson was supposed by his cotemporaries to have carried his esteem and admiration for Mrs. Thrale to such a pitch, that the displeasure he felt and expressed at her second marriage was ascribed by them to his disappointment at not

having been himself selected to supply the place of Mr. Thrale.

Boswell indeed assured Miss Seward, that Johnson "wished and expected to have married her himself;" and that lady observes, "he had always a metaphysical passion for some princess or other. First, the rustic Lucy Porter, before he married her nauseous mother,—next, the handsome but haughty Molly Aston,—next, the sublimated methodistic Hill Boothby, who read her Bible in Hebrew,—and, lastly, the more charming Mrs. Thrale, with the beauty of the first, the learning of the second, and with more wit than a bushel of such sinners and such saints."

The society which was frequently to be found at the hospitable mansion of Mr. Thrale, formed a coterie of wits and scholars, little, if at all, inferior to any of the Bas-bleu assemblages of the day; and, indeed, with Mrs. Thrale's abilities and acquirements, her wit and her gaiety, she was considered by several to be the equal of the celebrated Mrs. Montagu. Madame d'Arblay, who was well-acquainted with both these ladies, observes that "Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Thrale had long been set up as fair rival candidates for colloquial eminence; and each of them thought the other alone worthy to be her peer. Openly, therefore, when they met, they combated for precedence of admiration, with placid, though high-strained intellectual exertion on one side, and an exuberant pleasantry of classical allusion or quotation on the other, without the smallest malice in either; for so different were their tastes, as well as attributes, that neither of them envied, while each of them did justice to the powers of her opponent."

The parties at Mrs. Thrale's, through neither marked

with so much splendour as those of Mrs. Montagu, nor with so curious a selection of distinguished individuals as those of Mrs. Vesey, were yet considered by many to be equal to either, as Dr. Johnson, "himself a host," was usually at Mrs. Thrale's, or was always expected by her company; and as she herself possessed powers of entertainment more vivifying in gaiety than any of her competitors.*

In 1788, first appeared Miss Burney's "Evelina," the publication of which was accompanied with so many, and with such very peculiar circumstances, as to procure for that young lady a more than ordinary degree of attention; and among those who courted her society was Mrs. Thrale, at whose request Dr. Burney brought his daughter to the hospitable mansion at Streatham, where she henceforth became a favourite guest, and was regularly installed as one of the celebrated coterie which often assembled within its walls, and among which she enumerates, in addition to the constant visitant Dr. Johnson, who was, as has been observed, almost domiciled there, Burke, Goldsmith, Garrick, Murphy, Lords Loughborough, Mulgrave, and Westcote, Sir Lucas and Mr. Pepys, Major Holroyd, afterwards Lord Sheffield, Mr. Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton, Drs. Porteus and Hinchcliffe, Bishops of London and Peterborough, Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Crewe, Mrs. Hinchcliffe, Mrs. Porteus, Miss Gregory, "with a long et cætera of visitors less marked, who filled up the brilliant catalogue of the spirited associates of Streatham."

* For innumerable highly-interesting facts, regarding the mode of living of Streatham, we must refer the reader to vols. i. and ii. of the Diary and Correspondence of Madame D'Arblay.

Whilst the "Lives of the Poets" was in progress, when only the Thrales and Burneys were present, Dr. Johnson would frequently produce one of its proof sheets to amuse the breakfast-table at Streatham, which repast was always taken in the library, where also were the portraits above mentioned. Madame D'Arblay observes, this "was certainly the most sprightly and agreeable meeting of the day."

Dr. Johnson appears to have enacted the Mentor as well as the friend at Streatham, perhaps rather oftener than was quite agreeable to his lively hostess, who has, however, with perfect candour, mentioned some instances of his reproofs, in her amusing anecdotes of his life, even when the story told against herself. On one occasion, on her observing to a friend that she did not like goose,—"One smells it so while it is roasting," said she.

"But you, madam," replied the Doctor, "have been at all times a fortunate woman, having always had your hunger so forestalled by indulgence, that you never experienced the delight of smelling your dinner beforehand."

On another occasion, during a very hot and dry summer, when she was naturally but thoughtlessly wishing for rain, to lay the dust, as they drove along the Surrey roads. "I cannot bear," replied he, with some asperity, and an altered look, "when I know how many poor families will perish next winter for want of that bread which the present drought will deny them, to hear ladies sighing for rain, only that their complexions may not suffer from the heat, or their clothes be incommoded by the dust. For shame! leave off such foppish la-

mentations, and study to relieve those whose distresses are real."

Dr. Johnson used frequently to levy contributions among his richer for his poorer friends, by describing and laying before them the wants and necessities of the latter, and the Thrales appear upon all occasions to have lent a willing ear to his requests in the cause of charity.

Latterly, Mr. Thrale became liable to apoplectic seizures, of the danger of which neither himself nor his friends seem to have been aware till too late. He was of a peculiarly lethargic disposition, and as Dr. Johnson said, "would outsleep the seven sleepers;" but instead of putting himself under medical assistance, he was wont to repair to Bath, Tunbridge Wells, &c., for his health, without previously ascertaining that so doing would prove beneficial.

The Thrales were at Bath with Miss Burney during the terrible riots in the year 1780, when all London, and indeed all England, seemed "frighted from their propriety."

Mrs. Thrale had indeed good cause for her alarm, for then, as now, there were mistaken fanatics, and they took up an idea that Mr. Thrale was a concealed Papist, and kept a priest in the house. "Mr. Thrale," she says, "is scarcely in security here, for the rioters have strange ideas about his papism, somehow. We will move off, therefore, and finish our summer at Brighthelmstone, where I trust there is peace and quietness, and if not, why the sea and the packet are at hand."

Luckily, the injury the Thrales sustained appears to have been chiefly an attack upon the brewery, and the loss of a few butts of beer.

In the following year came the fatal stroke which carried Mr. Thrale off. It took place at his own town house in Grosvenor-square, in the spring of 1781. So little had such a blow been expected, that a large party of persons of fashion, talents, or celebrity, had been invited to a splendid entertainment.

Mrs. Thrale flew, immediately upon this misfortune, to Brighthelmstone, to her friend Mr. Scrase, for consolation and counsel, deferring returning to Streatham till her presence was necessary at the opening of the will.

Dr. Johnson immediately resumed his apartments at Streatham, cordially and gratefully bestowing on the remaining hostess every minute that she could desire or require of his time and services. And nothing could be wiser in counsel, more zealous in good offices, or kinder in intention, than the whole of his conduct in performing the duties of executor that devolved upon him by the will of his late friend.

The brewery was eventually disposed of to Mr. Barclay the Quaker, and Mr. Perkins, who had for many years been the worthy superintendent.

Miss Burney now became a still more constant guest at Streatham even than heretofore, and Dr. Johnson was a constant inmate there; but "the fine old lion," as one of Mrs. Thrale's guests whimsically termed him, after the death of Mr. Thrale, became almost unmanageable, and so often lacerated and wounded the feelings of her friends, and worried them with his overbearing intellectual superiority, as to render it extremely unpleasant to the amiable mistress of the house, whose own sweet temper seems to have made it morally impossible for her ever wilfully to have offended the prejudices of any individual.

Dr. Johnson felt the loss of Mr. Thrale very severely. In writing to Mrs. Thrale, he says, "No death, since that of my wife, has ever oppressed me like this. * * * I have lost a friend of boundless kindness, at an age when it is very unlikely I should find another. * * * He that has given you happiness in marriage, to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous, can give you another mode of happiness as a mother, and at last the happiness of losing all temporal cares in the thoughts of an eternity in heaven."

Dr. Johnson was appointed by Mr. Thrale one of the guardians of his five daughters and heiresses, Hester, Sophia, Susan, Cecilia, and Harriet, the only survivors of twelve children borne him by Mrs. Thrale. Of these, one died in the spring of 1783, and the eldest, in 1804, became the second wife of Viscount Keith.

Mrs. Thrale appears originally to have been of very domestic habits, and devoted to her children. She told a friend, that her mother disapproved so much of her going into public, that she never set foot in a theatre till her eldest child, born in 1764, went with her to an oratorio. In a letter to Miss Burney, she says, "I have read to them the Bible from beginning to end, the Roman and English histories, Milton, Shakspeare, Pope, and Young's works from head to heel; Warton and Johnson's Criticisms on the Poets; besides a complete system of dramatic writing; and classical—I mean the English classics—they are most perfectly acquainted with. Such works of Voltaire, too, as were not dangerous, we have worked at; 'Rollin des Belles Lettres,' and a hundred more."

Mrs. Thrale became acquainted with Signor Piozzi, an

amiable, accomplished, and gentlemanly man, though an artist by profession, through Dr. Burney, who recommended him as a music-master for the Miss Thrales during their visits at Bath and Brighton. Soon afterwards, he formed concerts in London, of which she became the patroness, interesting herself greatly in their success, and exerting herself to procure subscriptions for him.

When Piozzi's professional services were no longer requisite for Miss Thrale, an intercourse was still kept up between him and the family, and after Mr. Thrale's death, Mrs. Thrale's regard appears speedily to have been converted into feelings of a more tender nature; though she endeavoured to restrain her affection for him; and indeed her struggles with herself appear seriously to have affected both her health and her spirits. She is said to have allowed him, when on the continent, even before their marriage, eight hundred a year, a large sum even from the handsome sum of 3,000*l.* a year left her by Mr. Thrale, in addition to her original fortune of 10,000*l.*, and property in Wales, which she had inherited from her uncle, and which was entirely at her own disposal.

Unfortunately for Mrs. Thrale, her friend, Miss Burney, now at the zenith of her fame and popularity, was at this period requested by her friends again to exert her powers in the composition of another production; but, as at Streatham she had no time to herself, she went into the more perfect retirement of her friend Mrs. Crisp's house at Chesington, in Surrey.

On her return to Streatham, she writes: "Changed, indeed, was Streatham! Gone its chief, and changed his relict!—unaccountably, incomprehensibly, inde-

finably changed! She was absent and agitated; not two minutes could she remain in a place; she scarcely seemed to know whom she saw; her speech was so hurried, it was hardly intelligible; her eyes were assiduously turned from those who sought them; and her smiles were faint and forced."

Towards Miss Burney, Mrs. Thrale, however, always evinced the same affection and kindness; and after having at her solicitations revealed the secret of her attachment to Signor Piozzi, she clung to her for comfort to the last. From her other friends she gradually became estranged, and Dr. Johnson, in particular, was deeply wounded, through the palpably altered looks, tone, and deportment, of the bewildered lady of the mansion, who, cruelly aware what would be his wrath, and how overwhelming his reproaches against her projected union, wished to break up their residing under the same roof before it should be proclaimed.

It was this feeling probably which gave to her whole behaviour towards Johnson a sort of restless petulancy, of which she was sometimes hardly conscious; at others, nearly reckless; but which hurt him far more than she purposed, though short of the point at which Miss Burney supposes she aimed, "of precipitating a change of dwelling that would elude its being cast, either by himself or the world, upon a passion that her understanding blushed to own, even whilst she was sacrificing to it all of inborn dignity that she had been bred to hold most dear.

"But, at length, as she became more and more dissatisfied with her own situation, and impatient for its relief, she grew less and less scrupulous with regard to

her celebrated guest; she slighted his counsel; did not heed his remonstrances; avoided his society; was ready at a moment's hint to lend him her carriage to return to Bolt-court; but awaited a formal request to accord it for bringing him back."

That there were faults on both sides, however, may easily be conceived, Dr. Johnson being, as Mrs. Piozzi remarks, "extremely impracticable as an inmate, though most instructive as a companion, and useful as a friend." Mr. Thrale himself, formerly, could sometimes overrule his rigidity, by saying coldly, "There, there, we have had enough for one lecture, Dr. Johnson! we will not be upon education any more till after dinner, if you please," or some such speech; but "when there was nobody to restrain his dislikes, it was extremely difficult to find anybody with whom he could converse, without living always on the verge of a quarrel, or of something too like a quarrel to be pleasing."

In addition to the irascibility of his temper, the habit of very late hours, in which Dr. Johnson was fond of indulging, was one productive of great inconvenience to the mistress of a household, particularly if her health happened to be exceedingly delicate, which was the case with Mrs. Thrale; indeed, she acknowledges that she often hurt herself by sitting up to oblige him, as she frequently did in London till four o'clock in the morning. "At Streatham, indeed, she managed better, having always some friend who was kind enough to engage him in talk, and favour her retreat."

At last, in the month of June, 1784, on the return of Signor Piozzi to England, "Mrs. Thrale put an end to the alternate hopes and fears of her family and friends,

and to her own torturing conflicts, by a change of name that, for the rest of her life, produced nearly a change of existence."

Mrs. Piozzi herself communicated her change of name to Dr. Johnson in the following letter:—

"Bath, June 30.

"My dear Sir,

"The enclosed is a circular letter which I have sent to all the guardians, but our friendship demands somewhat more; it requires that I should beg your pardon for concealing from you a connexion which you must have heard of by many, but I suppose never believed. Indeed, my dear sir, it was concealed only to save us both needless pain; I could not have borne to reject that counsel it would have killed me to take, and I only tell you now because all is irrevocably settled, and out of your power to prevent. I will say, however, that the dread of your disapprobation has given me some anxious moments, and though perhaps I am become, by many privations, the most independent woman in the world, I feel as if acting without a parent's consent till you write kindly to

"Your faithful Servant."

The following was the solemn answer of Dr. Johnson:—

"London, July 8, 1784.

"Dear Madam,

"What you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent, as it has not been injurious to me; I therefore breathe out one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps useless, but at least sincere.

"I wish that God may grant you every blessing; that you may be happy in this world for a short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever I can contribute to your happiness I am very ready to repay, for that kindness which has soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched.

"Do not think slightly of the advice which I now presume to offer. Prevail upon Mr. Piozzi to settle in England: you may live here with more dignity than in Italy, and with more security; your rank will be higher, and your fortune more under your own eye. I desire not to detail all my reasons, but every argument of prudence and interest is for England, and only some phantoms of imagination seduce you to Italy.

"I am afraid, however, that my counsel is vain, yet I have eased my heart by giving it.

"When Queen Mary took the resolution of sheltering herself in England, the Archbishop of St. Andrew's, attempting to dissuade her, attended on her journey; and when they came to the irremediable stream that separated the two kingdoms, he walked by her side into the water, in the middle of which he seized her bridle, and with earnestness proportioned to her danger, and his own affection, pressed her to return. The Queen went forward. If the parallel reaches thus far, may it go no farther? The tears stand in my eyes.

"I am going into Derbyshire, and hope to be followed by your good wishes, for I am, with great affection,

"Yours, &c."

After having rendered herself the topic of conversation in all the coteries in town, it is not surprising that

Mrs. Piozzi should prefer the leaving England for a while to the following Dr. Johnson's advice of remaining at home. She accordingly, with Mr. Piozzi, made an excursion to the Continent, landed at Calais, September, 1784, and from thence proceeded to Paris.

From Paris the Piozzis went by Lyons to Turin, Geneva, and Milan, where they wintered.

In April, 1785, they proceeded by Mantua, Verona, and Padua, to Venice, with which, as well as with its inhabitants, Mrs. Piozzi was highly delighted; indeed, everywhere she appears to have been received with the most cordial kindness, and her gay and sociable spirit appears to have assimilated well with the *dolce far niente,* and with the easy manners, of the Italians.

In May, they proceeded by Ferrara and Bologna to Florence and Leghorn, where she says, "I have here finished that work which chiefly brought me hither—the Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson's Life. It is from this port they take their flight for England, while we retire for refreshment to the Bagni di Lucca." This is a most pleasing and interesting little work, carrying upon it the impress of truth, and giving an excellent idea of the great but wayward mortal with whom she had associated on terms of the utmost intimacy. It was published in 1786, and it appears to have raised her a host of enemies in the admirers of Dr. Johnson.

The Piozzis afterwards proceeded to Rome and Naples, where they wintered, and in the following year they returned by Loretto, Ancona, Bologna, Padua, &c., to Milan, in which neighbourhood they took a villa at Varese, and obtained permission to spend a week of their destined villeggiatura at the Borromæan palace, situated in the middle of Lago Maggiore, on the island so truly

called Isola Bella. She says, "Our manner of living here is positively like nothing real, and the fanciful description of Oriental magnificence, with Seged's retirement, in the Rambler, to his palace on the Lake Dambea, is all I ever read that could come in competition with it; for here is one barge full of friends from Milan, another carrying a complete band of thirteen of the best musicians in Italy, to amuse ourselves and them with concerts every evening upon the water by moonlight; while the inhabitants of these elysian regions who live upon the banks, come down in crowds to the shores, glad to receive additional delight, where satiety of pleasure seems the only evil to be dreaded."

On the 22d of September, the Piozzis finally quitted Milan, and crossing the Tyrolese Alps, soon reached Munich and Saltzburgh. They subsequently went on to Venice, and projected an excursion into Hungary, but were prevented by Mrs. Piozzi's being seized with a fever at a wretched village on the route.

In November they proceeded northward from Vienna, by Prague, to Dresden, Berlin, and Potzdam, and in January they continued their route to Hanover, Brussels, Antwerp, and Calais, her return to which place and to Dover, Mrs. Piozzi commemorates in some sportive lines.

Her lively and animated account of her travels on the Continent was published in 1789, in two volumes octavo, and though the style is careless in many instances, even to a degree of vulgarity, yet, perhaps, it better conveys the ideas she wishes to impart than if she had adopted one more ornate and grandiloquent.

Mrs. Piozzi evidently greatly enjoyed her liberty, and her emancipation from the Johsonian restraint she had endured

for nearly twenty years, and she seems never to have had cause to repent of the rash step her friends considered her to have taken in espousing Signor Piozzi. Envy at his superior good fortune, in having married a wealthy, clever, amiable, and highly attractive woman, appears to have caused many to delight in detracting from his personal merits, in which he abounded, though less favoured with the gifts of fortune. Miss Seward, however, in describing the pair, who paid her a visit at Lichfield in 1787, says, "I am become acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Piozzi. Dr. Johnson told me truth when he said she had more colloquial wit than most of our literary women. It is, indeed, a fountain of perpetual flow; but he did not tell me truth when he asserted that Piozzi was an ugly dog, without particular skill in his profession. Mr. Piozzi is a handsome man, in middle life, with gentle, pleasing, and unaffected manners, and with very eminent skill in his profession. Though he has not a powerful or fine-toned voice, he sings with transcending grace and expression."

With Mrs. Piozzi, Miss Seward kept up for some an occasional correspondence, which, perhaps, was rather an interchange of compliments upon the appearance of their mutual literary performances, than a friendly and familiar intercourse: however, the Piozzis appear to have, on her account, paid attention to her musical friends, the Savilles, when at Bath, where they principally resided after their return from the Continent.

In 1788, Mrs. Piozzi published, under the title of "Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D., to which are added, some Poems never before printed," &c., a correspondence between Johnson and herself from 1765 to 1784, in which the mighty moralist ap-

pears in a far more amiable light than upon many other occasions, and the interest he takes in the ordinary concerns of every day life reduces him more to a level with the rest of mankind than he seems in his didactic composition, or when laying down the law in common conversation. The few letters of her own writing which have been introduced by Mrs. Piozzi, are seen by no means in a disadvantageous light, even by the side of Johnsonian epistles; indeed, some persons gave hers decidedly the preference. The poems are chiefly translations from Boethius, and are the joint performances of Dr. Johnson and of Mrs. Piozzi, who wrote verses in an easy and an animated manner, and whose talent was frequently exercised by her learned friend in this line.

"The Three Warnings," a lively and sprightly tale, imitated from La Fontaine, is a favourable specimen of Mrs. Piozzi's poetical powers.

It was at Florence that Mrs. Piozzi became mixed up with the Della Cruscans, on which account she was somewhat severely lashed by Gifford, in his "Baviad and Mœviad." "But how do you think," said she subsequently to a friend, "'Thrale's grey widow' revenged herself? I contrived to get myself invited to meet him at supper in a friend's house, soon after the publication of the poems, sat opposite to him, saw that he was perplexed in the extreme, and smiling, proposed a glass of wine, as a libation to our future good fellowship. Gifford was sufficiently a man of the world to understand me, and nothing could be more courteous and entertaining than he was while we remained together."

In 1785, the Piozzis, together with Mr. Merry, Mr. Parsons, Mr Greathead, and others whom they casually met at Florence, projected and wrote in association,

"The Florence Miscellany," a collection of pieces in prose and verse, of which a few copies were printed, but not published. Some specimens of this somewhat flighty production appeared in a paper of the day, called "The World," as well as in several of the periodicals. The preface was written by Mrs. Piozzi, to whom the general conduct of the work was committed.

Mrs. Piozzi was a member, and might almost be considered as the founder, of the association, and she was perhaps the most talented and best informed among the coterie, whose productions, circulated with great assiduity among their friends, were by some as far too much extolled, as, perhaps, by others, with Mr. Gifford at their head, unfairly depreciated.

Mrs. Piozzi subsequently published, in 1794, a work in two volumes octavo, entitled "British Synonymy, or, An Attempt at Regulating the Choice of Words in Familiar Conversation," chiefly for the use of her friends, in which, though there is no very profound criticism displayed, yet it is interspersed with lively and amusing anecdotes, of which she had an endless number at command. As this was composed about the time of the French Revolution, it contains a number of somewhat flippant remarks upon that nation, though certainly, that wit and ridicule of which they make such free use themselves, was not very misplaced when exercised against the excesses and violence which characterized that eventful period.

Mrs. Piozzi's "Retrospection, or Review of the Most Striking and Important Events, Characters, Situations, and their Consequences, which the last 1,800 years have presented to the View of Mankind," in two volumes quarto, appeared in 1801.

It was not till some time after her return from the Continent, that at a concert at Salomon's, she again met her friend Dr. Burney. Notwithstanding the disapprobation with which she knew the Burneys had viewed her second marriage, with her usual invincible good humour, she immediately held out her hand, sportively ejaculating, "Here's Dr. Burney, as young as ever!"

In 1808, they again met at Bath, of which rencontre Dr. Burney gives the following account to his daughter, Madame D'Arblay:

"I have forgotten to mention that during my invalidity at Bath, I had an unexpected visit from your ci-devant Streatham friend, of whom I had lost sight for more than ten years. When her name was sent in, I was much surprised, but desired she might be asked to follow it; and I received her as an old friend with whom I had spent much time very happily, and never wished to quarrel. She still looks well, but is grave, and seems to be turned into candour itself, though she still says good things, and writes admirable notes, and I am told letters. We shook hands very cordially, and avoided any allusion to our long separation and its cause. Her *caro sposo* still lives; but is such an object from the gout, that the account of his sufferings made me pity him sincerely. He wished, she told me, to see his old friend *un beau matin*. I could not forbear compliance with this wish. I found him in great pain, but very glad to see me. The old rancour or ill-will excited by our opposition to the marriage is totally worn away. Indeed, it never could have existed but for *her* imprudence in betraying to him that proof of our friendship for *her*, which ought never to have been regarded as spleen against *him*, whom, certainly, nobody could blame

for accepting a gay rich widow. What could a man do better?"

Many years afterwards, an intercourse, both personal and epistolatory, was renewed between Mrs. Piozzi and Miss Burney, then Madame D'Arblay, and with it all their feelings of early cordiality; but circumstances subsequently caused another separation.

On their return from the Continent, the Piozzis appear principally to have resided at Bath, though Mrs. Piozzi built a beautiful little villa in a pleasant part of the vale of Clwydd, in North Wales, called Brynbella, where she occasionally passed some time.

A friend, who, in an agreeable little work called "Piozziana," has recorded several interesting anecdotes of the latter days of this celebrated lady, has given the following account of Mrs. Piozzi, quite late in life:

"She was short, and though well-proportioned, broad, and deep-chested. Her hands were muscular and almost coarse, but her writing was, even in her eightieth year, exquisitely beautiful; and one day, while conversing with her on the subject of education, she observed that "All misses now-a-days write so like each other, that it is provoking;" adding, "I love to see individuality of character, and abhor sameness, especially in what is feeble and flimsy." Then spreading her hand, she said, "I believe I owe what you are pleased to call my good writing to the shape of this hand, for my uncle, Sir Robert Cotton, thought it too manly to be employed in writing like a boarding-school girl; and so I came by my vigorous, black manuscript.

When sitting for her picture to Roche of Bath, she required him to make the painting in all respects a likeness; to take care to show her face deeply rouged, which it

always was; and to introduce a trivial deformity of the lower-jaw on the left side, where she had been severely hurt by her horse treading on her, as she lay prostrate, after being thrown in Hyde Park. This miniature her friend states to be, "in the essential of resemblance, perfect; as all who recollect the original, her very erect carriage, and most expressive face, could attest."

When looking at "her little self," as she called the picture, she would speak drolly of what she once was, as if talking of some one else. One day, turning to her friend, she said, "No; I never was handsome, I had always too many strong points in my face for beauty."

"I ventured to express a doubt of this," continues the narrative, "and said that Dr. Johnson was certainly an admirer of her personal charms. She replied, she believed his devotion was at least as warm towards the table and the table-talk at Streatham. I was tempted to observe that I thought, as I still do, that Johnson's anger on the event of her second marriage was excited by some feeling of disappointment, and that I suspected he had formed hopes of attaching her to himself. It would be disingenuous on my part to attempt to repeat her answer; I forget it; but the impression on my mind is, that she did not contradict me."

On her friend's telling her, he wondered she should so far sacrifice to fashion, as to take the trouble of wearing rouge, which she carefully put on her cheeks every day before she went out, and generally before she would admit a visitor, her answer was, "that her practice of painting did not proceed from any silly compliance with Bath fashion, or any fashion; still less, if possible, from the desire of appearing younger than she was; but from this circumstance, that in early life she had worn rouge

as other young persons did in her day, as a part of dress; and after continuing the habit for some years, she discovered that it had introduced a dead yellow into her complexion, quite unlike that of her natural skin, and that she wished to conceal the deformity."

In defiance of the prevailing weakness among old people, that of supposing everything worse now than it was formerly, she always maintained that "nothing but ignorance or forgetfulness of what our grandfathers and grandmothers generally did and suffered, not politically, but in matters of dress, behaviour, &c., could incline any one to entertain a doubt as to the fact of modern improvement in most of the essentials of life 'This, she would say, was especially true with regard to our habiliments; and she used to expatiate very agreeably, not only on the absurdities of the habits usually worn in her early days, but on the consequent embarrassment in which the artists of the age were involved.

"Mrs. Piozzi's nature was one of kindness," observes her friend; "she derived pleasure from endeavouring to please; and if she perceived a moderate good quality in another, she generally magnified it into an excellence; whilst she appeared blind to faults and foibles which could not have escaped the scrutiny of one possessing only half her penetration. But, as I have said, her disposition was friendly. It was so; and to such an extent, that during several years of familiar acquaintance with her, although I can recite many instances, I might say, hundreds, of her having spoken of the characters of others, I never heard one word of vituperation from her lips, of any person who was the subject of discussion, except once when Baretti's name was mentioned. Of him, she said that he was a bad man; but on my

hinting a wish for particulars, after so heavy a charge, she seemed unwilling to explain herself, and spoke of him no more."

"In direct opposition to Boswell, Beloe, and others, I venture to assert, that it was not in the power of any one who knew her to find aught in her character to despise, nor to refuse the meed of approbation to her benevolence, her talents, and her acquirements, or to the fascinating courtliness of her manners."

"She preserved unimpaired to the last her strength and her faculties of body and mind. When past eighty, she would describe minute features in a distant landscape, or touches in a painting which even short-sighted young persons failed to discover till pointed out to them.

When her friends were fearful of her over-exciting herself, she would say, "This sort of thing is greatly in the mind, and I am almost tempted to say the same of growing old at all, especially as it regards those of the usual concomitants of age, viz. laziness, defective sight, and ill-temper: sluggishness of soul, and acrimony of disposition, commonly begin before the encroachments of infirmity; they creep upon us insidiously, and it is the business of a rational being to watch these beginnings, and counteract them."

On the 27th January, 1820, Mrs. Piozzi gave a sumptuous entertainment at the Town Assembly Rooms, Bath, to between seven and eight hundred friends, whom, assisted by Sir John and Lady Salusbury, she received with a degree of ease, cheerfulness, and polite hospitality, peculiarly her own. This fête, given upon the completion of her eightieth year, was opened by herself in person dancing with Sir John Salusbury, with extraor-

dinary elasticity and dignity, and she subsequently presided at a sumptuous banquet, supported by a British Admiral of the highest rank on each side, "with her usual gracious and queen-like deportment."

A friend calling on her one day by appointment, she showed him a number of what are termed pocket-books, and said she was sorely embarrassed on a point on which she requested his advice.

"You see in this collection," said she, "a diary of mine of more than fifty years of my life; I have scarcely omitted anything which occurred to me during the time I have mentioned; my books contain the conversation of every person of almost every class with whom I have held intercourse; my remarks on what was said; downright facts, and scandalous *on dits;* personal portraits, and anecdotes of the character concerned, criticisms on the publications and authors of the day, &c. Now I am approaching the grave, and agitated by doubts as to what I should do—whether burn my manuscripts, or leave them to posterity? Thus far, my decision is to *destroy* my papers; shall I, or shall I not?"

The advice given was by no means to do an act which, when done, could not be amended—to keep the papers from prying eyes, and to trust them to the discretion of survivors. Whereupon, she replaced the numerous volumes in her cabinet, observing, that "for the present they were rescued from destruction."

If still in existence, it were to be wished, that portions at least of Mrs. Piozzi's Diary should be given to the public, which from her ready wit and multifarious information, her remarks on the various celebrated characters with whom she associated, and upon the publications that then issued from the press, could not fail to be ex-

tremely interesting; whilst the friendliness of her disposition would in itself be a guarantee, that there would be nothing of an invidious and offensive nature, to wound the feelings of the most sensitive of her very few surviving cotemporaries.

In her last illness, unable to articulate, on being visited by Sir George Gibbs, when she saw him by her bedside, she signified by her looks that she knew him well; and unable to speak, conveyed her mournful conviction of her situation, by tracing in the air with her extended hands the exact outline of a coffin. Suddenly, after laying some time silent, as if exhausted, she sat up, and with a piercing accent, and distinct utterance, said, "I die in the trust, and in the fear of God!" These were her last words.

She died on the 2d of May, 1821, in her eighty-second year, after a short illness, at her house in Clifton, where she had resided after the death of Mr. Piozzi, which took place in 1809.

The remains of Mrs. Piozzi were conveyed into North Wales, where they were interred in the burial-place of the Salusbury family.

WORKS.

Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson's Life, 1786.

Travels, 2 vols. 8vo. 1789.

Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D., 2 vols. 8vo. 1788.

British Synonymy, 2 vols. 8vo. 1794.

Retrospection, or Review of the Most Striking and Important Events which the last 1,800 Years have Presented, &c. 2 vols. 4to. 1801.

MADAME D'ARBLAY.

Miss Frances Burney, afterwards Madame D'Arblay, was born at Lynn Regis, in Norfolk, on the 13th June, 1752. She was the second daughter and third child of Dr. Burney, a musical professor of great skill, afterwards well known in the literary world as the author of an erudite History of Music.

She was, during her childhood, the most backward of all his family; indeed, at eight years old, she was ignorant of the letters of the alphabet, though at ten, she began scribbling almost incessantly, little works of invention, in private, in characters illegible to all but herself.

Previous to this time, which she herself terms the period of her "writing mania," she recollected hearing a neighbouring lady recommend to her mother the quickening of her attention by chastisement; but her alarm was instantly superseded by gratitude and surprise, when she heard gently murmured in reply, "No, no,—I am not uneasy about Fanny!"

She soon began to convert every scrap of white paper which she could procure, into elegies, odes, plays, songs,

stories, tragedies, and epic poems; which, however, were never shown to any one but to her younger sister Susanna, whose praises rendered their secret readings the happiest moments of their girlish days.

At fifteen, Miss Burney began to consider it as her duty to subdue this writing passion, and accordingly, seizing an opportunity when her parents were from home, she made a bonfire of all her literary performances, in a paved play-court, resolving henceforth to abstain from scribbling.

The last of her works committed to the flames was one entitled "The History of Caroline Evelyn." Of this tale, however, she retained so vivid and animated an impression, and the singular situations to which Caroline's infant daughter, "Evelina," might be exposed between the elegant connexions of her mother, and the vulgar ones of her grandmother, were so irresistibly and unconsciously imprinted on her mind, and pent up in her memory, long before a paragraph was committed to paper, that, subsequently, her celebrated novel, entitled "EVELINA," was the result of these recollections; and ten years afterwards, in 1788, it was given to the world, under very peculiar circumstances, which have been recently disclosed by herself, in her delightful "Diary and Correspondence,"—to which the reader is referred for the most interesting and curious account of any celebrated literary production that was perhaps ever put on record.* In the meantime we must glance briefly at the period of her life preceding this event.

Notwithstanding all her precautions, Mrs. Burney's

* See Vol. I. of the "Diary and Correspondence of the Author of Evelina."

vigilant eye had early discovered her step-daughter's love of seclusion, and from scraps of writing, and other tokens of her favourite employments, perhaps arose her alarm lest she should become that dreaded thing, an *authoress*. In spite, however, of her vigilance, *it was to be!* Miss Burney's vocation was her pen, and she eventually became one of the most popular writers of the day.

When in London, she used to write in a little play-room up two pair of stairs, which contained the toys of the younger members of the family. At Lynn, to which place they paid annual visits, after they had quitted it as a residence, she would shut herself up in a summer-house, which went by the name of *the cabin*, and there amuse herself by committing to paper the numerous ideas with which her mind was teeming.

After the heroic immolation of her compositions to filial duty, the embryo authoress, for some time perhaps adhering to her resolution of composing no more works of fiction, made herself amends by commencing a Journal,* which she continued without intermission for many years, and which she dedicated to "NOBODY."

"To *whom*" (she says) "must I dedicate my wonderful, surprising, and interesting adventures?—to *whom* dare I reveal my private opinions of my nearest relations? my secret thoughts of my dearest friends? my own hopes, fears, reflections, and dislikes?—Nobody."

In the introduction to her Journal, she says, "To have some account of my thoughts, manners, acquaintance, and actions, when the hour arrives at which time is more nimble than memory, is the reason which induces

* This is the "Diary" which we have referred to in a preceding page.

me to keep a Journal—a Journal in which I must confess my every thought, must open my whole heart."

Finding, probably, that her early literary performances procured her more discredit than honour, Miss Burney very sagely resolved to devote herself to some usual and commonplace feminine avocations, and in her Lynn Journal she states, that "she never indulged herself with writing and reading except in the afternoon, always scrupulously devoting her time to needlework till after dinner."

Luckily for the world, these repasts were taken at a much earlier period when Miss Burney was a child, than in the present day, or perhaps, instead of "Evelina," "Cecilia," and "Camilla," no memorials of her would have been handed down to posterity, beyond some old screen and chair covers, even now so often the resource from the attacks of ennui, of the industrious idlers of more modern times.

In company, or before strangers, Miss Burney, from the earliest childhood, was exceedingly silent and reserved, and from the gravity and composure of her appearance, was often termed "the old lady," by the friends who frequented her father's house. But, like many other persons, she was an acute observer of what was passing around, and at times, when her timidity was overcome by an ebullition of spirits, she would enact imaginary characters of her own invention, or, after seeing a play, take off the actors, and compose speeches for them, before she could read their parts.

The only regular instruction she ever received, was when she was, together with her sister Susanna, placed for a short period at a boarding-school in Queen-square, that they might be out of the way during their mother's

last illness; and when the melancholy tidings of this lady's death were communicated to them, the agony of Frances, though then but nine years of age, was so great, that the governess declared she had never met with a child of such intense feelings.

But though she received little regular education, there was no want of industry and application on her part; for, at an early age, she became acquainted with the best authors in her father's library, of which she had the uncontrolled range; and she was accustomed to make extracts from, and remarks upon, the books she read, some of which it is said would not have disgraced her maturer judgment.

She had also the advantage of the example of her father's own industry and perseverance, to stimulate her to exertion; for Dr. Burney, notwithstanding his numerous professional engagements as a teacher of music, studied and acquired the French and Italian languages *on horseback*, from pocket grammars and vocabularies he had written out for the purpose.

In the French language his daughter Frances received some instructions from her sister Susanna, who was educated in France; and in Latin, at a later period, she had some lessons from Dr. Johnson himself, though, it must be confessed, she does not seem to have taken much delight in this study—applying to that learned language rather to please her tutor than herself.

Dr. Burney had at this period a large circle of intellectual and even literary acquaintance, and at his house often congregated an agreeable but miscellaneous society, including, besides many eminent for literature, several accomplished foreigners, together with our native artists and scientific men; and his children, emancipated

from the restraints of a schoolroom, were allowed to be present at, and often to take a share in, the conversation of their father's guests; by which their minds were opened, their judgments enlightened, and their attention turned to intellectual pursuits; perhaps in a far greater degree than if they had regularly undergone all the drudgery of the usual routine of what is termed "education."

The following is a comparative sketch of the character of Miss Frances Burney, drawn about this period by her younger sister, Susanna, afterwards Mrs. Phillips,—to whom her Diary was subsequently addressed.

"Sister Fanny is unlike her [Hester Burney, the eldest daughter] in almost everything, yet both are very amiable, and love each other as sincerely as ever sisters did. The characteristics of Hetty seem to be wit, generosity, and openness of heart;—Fanny's, sense, sensibility, and bashfulness, and even a degree of prudery. Her understanding is superior, but her diffidence gives her a bashfulness before company with whom she is not intimate, which is a disadvantage to her. My eldest sister shines in conversation, because, though very modest, she is totally free from any *mauvaise honte;* were Fanny equally so, I am persuaded she would shine no less. I am afraid my eldest sister is too communicative, and that my sister Fanny is too reserved. They are both charming girls—*des filles comme il y en a peu.*"

Dr. Burney was at this period accustomed to employ his daughters in copying out his manuscripts for the press,—tracing over and over again the same page, with the endless alterations his critical judgment suggested. Upon these occasions, Frances was his principal amanuensis, and she thus became early initiated into all the

mysteries of publication, of which she subsequently so singularly availed herself.

During Dr. Burney's excursion on the Continent, whither he went to collect materials for the Musical Tour which he afterwards published, his family resided either at Lynn or at Chesington, where his daughter Frances gradually arranged and connected the disjointed scraps and fragments in which "Evelina" was first written, many years before it was printed.

After her father's return, when confined by spasmodic rheumatism, owing to the fatigues and difficulties of his hurried journey, he generally kept one of his daughters seated near him, pen in hand, that he might dictate to them the ideas which occurred to him for the musical work he had in contemplation; though some years elapsed before he was enabled to put into execution his original plan, the first volume of his "History of Music" not being published till the year 1776.

Fanny was, however, still but a child when her father's rising reputation and re-established health induced his friends to advise his again quitting Lynn, and removing to London, as the best theatre for a man of his abilities, and in 1760, he accordingly settled himself in Poland-street, which was at that period a place of fashionable resort; and for his neighbours in the street, which then opened upon the fields beyond Oxford-road, he had the the Duke of Chandos, Lady Augusta Bridges, the Hon. John Smith, and the Miss Barrys, Sir Willoughby and the Misses Aston. Here professional engagements poured upon him in such rapid succession, that he had not an hour at his disposal; and it may be worth mentioning, as illustrative of the habits of the nobility eighty years ago, that the Countess of Tankerville received lessons

of him at seven o'clock in the morning, twice in the week.

Shortly after their settlement in London, a blight awaited this hitherto happy family, in the loss of Mrs. Burney, who had been some time declining. In her last moments, with one hand on her eldest daughter's head, and the other in that of Dr. Burney, she serenely said, "Now this is dying pleasantly! in the arms of one's friends!" and when her husband burst forth into an uncontrollable agony of sorrow, she endeavoured to repress his grief, by gently uttering a penetratingly tender "O Charles!" — shortly after which she breathed her last.

The loss was a terrible one to Dr. Burney, who was left a widower with six orphan children. His eldest son, then but ten years of age, was a nominal midshipman in Admiral Montagu's ship, but the others were all too young to be his companions, and were indeed still in their nursery.

After some hesitation, Dr. Burney eventually conveyed his eldest and third daughters to Paris, where he placed them under the care of a French lady recommended to him. Various causes prevented his taking thither his second daughter, Frances, one of which was, that from the tender veneration she entertained for her maternal grandmother, who had been a Roman Catholic, he doubted whether at so early an age she might not run a risk of being converted to that religion on the Continent. He, however, fully contemplated the eventually sending her thither, though, when the time came, circumstances induced him to change his intention.

Six years after the demise of the first Mrs. Burney, her friend Mrs. Allen, then become a widow, came to

town for the education of her daughter, when the professional attendance of Dr. Burney, who gave her instructions in music, led to a renewal of their former intimacy, which terminated in her becoming his second wife, and the Paris scheme for his two other daughters was then abandoned, the youngest, Charlotte, being sent to a school in Norfolk, whilst the second, Frances, remained with her other sisters under the paternal roof.

Numerous were the friends who frequented Dr. Burney's hospitable residence in Poland-street, and also that in Queen-square, which he subsequently occupied. The latter he afterwards exchanged for the house in St. Martin's-lane, which had once been the abode of Sir Isaac Newton, and where still remained, above the attics, his observatory, which, with due reverence, Dr. Burney caused to be repaired and preserved.

Miss Burney (as by the marriage of her elder sister Frances was now become,) appears to have been endowed with no small portion of the English complaint of *mauvaise honte*, and she was so constitutionally shy, that, excepting among her family and intimate friends, her worth and talents were probably never fully appreciated, until, in the character of a first-rate novel writer, she unexpectedly burst upon the world with her "Evelina," the phœnix which had arisen from the ashes of Caroline Evelyn, erstwhile immolated on the funereal-pile in the paved court in Poland-street.

As her little narrative grew under her hands, which was written by stealth, in a closet up two pair of stairs, (the play-room formerly mentioned, appropriated to the use of the younger children,) the wish of seeing it in print began to cross her imagination, to the great amuse-

ment, as well as amazement, of her sister Charlotte, her confidant in the first instance, who knew the sensitive affright with which she shrunk from all observation.

Being her father's principal amanuensis, and, consequently, being apprehensive lest her handwriting might be recognised by some compositor of his "History of Music," she took the trouble to copy the manuscript of her own work in a feigned hand; but growing weary of the employment, after having completed the first and second volumes, she wrote a letter to Mr. Dodsley, the bookseller, without signature, offering her performance to him, and promising to send the sequel in the following year. Mr. Dodsley, in answer, declined looking at any thing that was anonymous. Mr. Lowndes, a bookseller in the city, was then, accidentally, fixed upon by the youthful coterie; her brother Charles, afterwards the celebrated Greek scholar, having been admitted into the secret, in order that he might enact the part of agent in the business; and Mr. Lowndes, to their no small delight, requested to see the manuscript, the two first volumes of which were consequently conveyed to Fleet-street, where they were left to their fate.

Mr. Lowndes's answer was, that he could not think of publishing an unfinished book, though he liked the work, and should be "ready to purchase and print it when it should be finished."

Tired and disappointed, Miss Burney now for some time abandoned her scheme. But having at last finished the third volume, she began to think it right to communicate the project to her father, which she had hitherto abstained from doing, both from the confusion of acknowledging her authorship, and the dread lest he should desire to see the performance! Seizing a happy

moment of a kind *tête-à-tête* with Dr. Burney, she at last avowed to him her secret, and her wish to see her work in print, hastily adding, "her brother Charles would transact all the business with a bookseller, who should never know her name."

Her confession was received by her father with such a hearty fit of laughter, that the embarrassed writer could not resist joining in it. He, however, offered no objection to her project, and recommending her to preserve her incognito in the affair, he dismissed the subject without asking to see the work.

Miss Burney now, with heightened spirits, again transmitted her manuscript to Mr. Lowndes, who shortly after, sent his approbation of the work, together with an offer of 20*l.* for the copyright.—"An offer which was accepted with alacrity, and boundless surprise at its magnificence!!" This, with a subsequent addition of ten pounds, after the third edition, was all Miss Burney ever received for her popular work of "Evelina," of which several thousands were sold within a few months of its first appearance.

The receipt for this settlement, signed simply by "the Editor of Evelina," was conveyed by her agent to Fleet-street, and the first she heard of its fate, having dropt all correspondence with Mr. Lowndes, was the hearing read aloud, accidentally at the breakfast-table, by her mother-in-law, Mrs. Burney,—"This day was published, 'Evelina,' or, a Young Lady's entrance into the world. Printed for T. Lowndes, Fleet-street."

Irresistible smiles were exchanged by the young people, alone cognizant of the affair, and Mrs. Burney passed on unconsciously to other articles.

A violent fever, with which Dr. Burney was soon

seized, and subsequently, symptoms in herself, of an inflammation in the lungs, for some time occupied the attention of the Burneys; and the young authoress was conveyed to Chesington Hall, where resided her father's excellent and accomplished friend Mr. Crisp, for the benefit of country air. Here she remained for some months, perfectly unaware that "Evelina" was suddenly become a popular work, and that every one was inquiring the name of its writer.

Six months from its publication had nearly elapsed, when Dr. Burney appears to have accidentally met with an account of the work in a review, and though he immediately sent for it, and read it with approbation, he did not at first know by whom it was written. For the minute and highly interesting details of the subsequent discovery, the reader is again referred to Madame D'Arblay's "Diary and Correspondence," vol. i.

Shortly after this, Mrs. Thrale, with whom Dr. Burney was professionally employed, as well as intimately acquainted, commissioned him to order Mr. Lowndes to send her "Evelina," and when the secret of the authorship was at last revealed to that lady, an introduction ensued, which coloured the future life of Miss Burney.

The desire for literary reputation, which Miss Burney probably derived from her father, was in her curiously mingled with the dread of notoriety, which had been so duly impressed upon her by Mrs. Burney's lectures; and her feelings, when she first heard rumours of the sudden and almost unexampled popularity of her work, appears to have been a singular compound of the very natural exultation of a successful author, joined to that aversion to being treated as a personage of celebrity, which every female of delicacy must experience.

Whilst unknown and unsuspected as the author of "Evelina," several curious scenes occurred, from the work being discussed and talked over in Miss Burney's presence, by individuals totally unconscious of the contiguity of its authoress. On one occasion she accompanied Mrs. Burney to Mr. Lowndes the publisher, and introducing themselves by purchasing a copy, they began to cross-question him about the person who wrote it, when he told her, "All he knew of the matter was, that it was a *gentleman* of the other end of the town. That at one time he thought it was Horace Walpole's, for he had once published a book in this snug manner;" and at last he wound up his information by stating, with a most important face, "To tell you the truth, madame, I have been informed it is a piece of real secret history; and in that case it will never be known."

"This was too much for me," observed Miss Burney; "I grinned irresistibly, and was obliged to look out at the shop window till we came away."

The work was soon introduced at Chesington, and Miss Burney, who considered "Evelina" to be "a young lady with whom she had some right to make free," volunteered to read it aloud to "her Daddy Crisp;" but her embarrassment preventing her doing it justice, she was forced to relinquish the task; and he, not having the slightest suspicion that the interesting young invalid by his side was the author, great was his surprise and astonishment, when, shortly afterwards, Dr. Burney, taking him into what he termed "the Conjuring Closet," revealed the secret.

The introduction of Miss Burney at Streatham, where she immediately became a favoured and frequent guest,

may be said to have formed an epoch in her life; for here she became on the most intimate and familiar terms, not only with the celebrated mistress of the house, but also with all the literary circle that visited there; and the attentions paid her were so flattering, as to become occasionally almost distressing.

With Dr. Johnson in particular, she speedily became an especial favourite, and he spoke of her invariably in such high terms of commendation, that as Miss Palmer (Sir Joshua Reynolds's niece) told her, "All the world gave her to him, for he spoke of her as he spoke of hardly anybody."

In Miss Burney's recently published Diary, several very amusing scenes are recorded, in which this "fine old lion," as he was termed by one of the party at Streatham, is portrayed as chatting, laughing, and even flirting with Mrs. Thrale, and his "dear little Burney," as it was his wont to term her, in a manner which must surprise those who consider him merely as the stern moralist and the awful critic.

Dr. Johnson appreciated very justly, both the abilities and moral excellence of Miss Burney. On one occasion, speaking of her work, he observes, "Evelina seems a work that should result from long experience, and deep and intimate knowledge of the world; yet it has been written without either. Miss Burney is a real wonder. What she is, she is intuitively. Dr. Burney told me she had had the fewest advantages of any of his daughters, from some peculiar circumstances. And such has been her timidity, that he himself had not any suspicion of her powers. * * * Modesty with her is neither pretence nor decorum; it is an ingredient in her nature; for she

who could part with such a work for twenty pounds, could know so little of its worth, or of her own, as to leave no possible doubt of her humility."

Partly by the persuasion of Mrs. Thrale, together with that of other friends, Miss Burney was now induced to attempt a comedy, entitled "The Witlings," of which Mr. Murphy, as well as Mrs. Thrale, appears to have thought highly. But she was afterwards induced to abandon it, at the instance of Mr. Crisp,—one of whose chief objections to it was its resemblance to Molière's "Femmes Scavantes,"—which, however, the writer had literally never seen or read, when she composed her play.

Miss Burney's society was now in constant requisition, and she was introduced to Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Carter, Burke, Sheridan, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other distinguished persons, from all of whom she met with the most flattering attention.

At Bath, whither, in 1780, she went with the Thrales, she became acquainted with the Bowdler family, Lord Mulgrave, Mrs. Dobson, the writer of Petrarch's Life, Lady Miller of Bath Easton, &c. &c.

Miss Burney soon began to grow weary of all this popularity. In 1782, she says, "I begin to be heartily sick and fatigued of this continual round of visiting, and these eternal new acquaintances;"—and in allusion to the parties to which she was constantly engaged, she observes, "For my own part, if I wished to prescribe a cure for dissipation, I should think none more effectual than to give it a free course. The many who have lived so from year to year, amaze me now more than ever; for now more than ever I can judge what dissipation has to offer. I would not lead a life of daily engagements

even for another month, for any pay short of the most serious and substantial benefit. I have been tired some time, though I have only now broke out; but I will restore my own spirit and pleasure, by getting more courage in making refusals, and by giving that zest to company and diversion which can only be given by making them subservient to convenience, and by taking them in turn with quietness and retirement."

Miss Burney was a welcome guest at the parties of Mrs. Montagu, "the acknowledged Queen of the Blues," according to Dr. Johnson, which were conducted with more form and state than those of Mrs. Vesey who originated the Bas-bleu meetings, celebrated by the pen of Hannah More. She also visited at the house of the Honourable Miss Monckton, afterwards Countess of Cork and Orrery, whose assemblies were conducted with a degree of ease and good humoured nonchalance, that almost bordered on eccentricity; whilst at those of Sir Joshua Reynolds and of his sister, Miss Reynolds, she met the most talented of "The Blues;" and even at Mrs. Chapone's, whose parties, from her own ill health and want of strength, were of a quiet and more subdued style, were to be seen Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Carter, Hannah More, the clever family of the Burroughs, Sir William Pepys, and the ingenious and excellent Mrs. Barbauld.

Miss Burney had already become a constant and a favourite guest at Streatham, when the sudden and unexpected death of its master, Mr. Thrale, in the spring of 1781, appeared a call upon her to redouble her attentions to his captivating widow, who, in her troubles, clung with increased affection to her fair friend, till informed that it was desirable, whilst still at the height of

her popularity, the young writer should again try her fortune in the lottery of literature. Very reluctantly did Mrs. Thrale part with her, and she was conveyed by Mr. Crisp to Chesington, and, installed in the quiet and exclusive possession of what he was wont to term "The Doctor's Conjuring Closet," where she devoted some months to the composition of a new novel.

Although Miss Burney had intended to have remained at Chesington till her "Cecilia" was completed, the marriage of her favourite sister, Mrs. Phillips, recalled her to the paternal roof, where she put the finishing hand to this her second literary production.

The publication of "Cecilia," which took place in 1782, procured for Miss Burney a fresh accession of fame and popularity. Expectation, which had been raised to the highest pitch by her previous performance, "Evelina," was not disappointed in "the Heiress;" though even then (and it remains so at the present day) it was doubtful whether the youthful simplicity of Evelina, or the more formed and dignified character of Cecilia, were the most interesting.

In the progress of "Cecilia," the manuscript was often submitted to the revision of some of her most particular friends,—her father, Mrs. Thrale, Mr. Crisp, &c.; but it does not appear, excepting in the curtailment of certain parts, and some slight changes of the original story, that their criticisms induced her to make many alterations. Indeed, Mr. Crisp's advice to her was, "Whoever she might think fit to consult, let their talents and taste be ever so great, she was to hear what they had to say, but never to give up or alter a tittle merely on their authority, unless it perfectly coincided with her own inward feelings." In another place, he well observed:—

"In works of genius, fancy, imagination, it is not the long, learned argumentations of critics, *pro* and *con*, that come with the compass and line in their hands, to measure right and wrong, that will decide; no, 'tis the genuine, unbiassed, uninfluenced, inward feelings of mankind that are the true, infallible test, ultimately, of sterling merit."

Among many other eulogiums which the publication of "Cecilia" called forth, the following is the opinion of the celebrated Burke on "the Memoirs of an Heiress." In a letter to Miss Burney he says, "There are few—I believe I may say fairly there are none at all—that will not find themselves better informed concerning human nature, and their stock of observations enriched, by reading your 'Cecilia.'" * * * "I might trespass on your delicacy if I should fill my letter to you with what I fill my conversation to others; I should be troublesome to you alone if I should tell you all I feel and think on the natural vein of humour, the tender pathetic, the comprehensive and noble moral, and the sagacious observation, that appear quite throughout this extraordinary performance."

On Miss Burney's return to Streatham, though welcomed with even more than customary kindness, yet did everything appear to her sadly changed, and in the spring of 1783, Mrs. Thrale broke up her establishment there, let the house, and retired to Bath.

In the following year took place Mrs. Thrale's singular union with Mr. Piozzi, which estranged her from many of her former friends, who had probably expressed their disapprobation in stronger terms than was pleasing to his feelings. Among these was Miss Burney, and all intercourse and even correspondence between herself and

Mrs. Piozzi, ceased, till renewed at Bath, after a long lapse of years.

After a confidential friendship of six years, this breach in their intimacy could not but have been extremely painful to Miss Burney. Her feelings were also severely tried by the death of her old and paternal friend, Mr. Crisp, which took place at Chesington, April 24, 1783; and in the following year, on the 13th of December, expired her scarcely less valued, though more lately acquired friend, Dr. Johnson.

But though she had lost so many valuable friends, Miss Burney appears to have been fortunate enough to have secured others equally attached to her. The publication of "Cecilia" having added greatly to her literary celebrity, her society was more courted than ever, and many new and illustrious names were added to the list of her friends and admirers. Among the most valued of these were the Lockes of Norbury Park, where she made frequent visits, the Cambridges, and the venerable Mrs. Delany, to whom she was first introduced by Mrs. Chapone in 1783, and with whom, notwithstanding the disparity in their ages, she formed a most tender and intimate friendship, which lasted till the close of that lady's existence. So confidential indeed was the intercourse between them, that Mrs. Delany, not being herself equal to the task, from having almost entirely lost the use of her eyesight, entrusted to Miss Burney the examination of her letters and manuscripts, who assisted her in determining what should be preserved or destroyed. She even began revising and continuing a memoir of Mrs. Delany's life; but this unfortunately was never completed.

At Mrs. Delany's house, Miss Burney met with a small but select society. The Duchess Dowager of Portland was an almost constant visitor there; also the Countesses of Bute and Bristol, Lady Wallingford, (daughter of Mississippi Law,) Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Chapone; Horace Walpole, Owen Cambridge and Soame Jenyns.

But this coterie of "the old wits," as they were termed by Dr. Burney, was broken up by the death of the Duchess of Portland in 1785, just as Miss Burney was on the point of paying a lengthened visit at Bulstrode Park.

When the melancholy tidings of her death reached Miss Burney, she was with her father at Chesington, where she was acting as his amanuensis; but she immediately repaired to Mrs. Delany, to endeavour, as far as was in her power, to alleviate her affliction for the loss of such a friend, whose society was invaluable to her, and whose house had ever afforded so delightful and salutary a change to Mrs. Delany,—it being regarded by her as another home, where her presence was always welcome.

Immediately on hearing of this sad event, the King and Queen offered to Mrs. Delany a residence at Windsor, anxious that she should suffer no privations by the death of her friend; and thither she repaired at the end of the year. She was soon afterwards visited there by Miss Burney, and the circumstance ultimately led to a new epoch in Miss Burney's life. She was there first personally introduced to the Royal Family, who often called on Mrs. Delany in the most easy and unostentatious manner. The result of this introduction will presently be seen.

In the summer of 1785, the celebrated Comtesse De Genlis came over to England, and at her express desire, Miss Burney was invited to meet her at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds. "She was then about thirty-five years of age, but on the whole her appearance was nearly ten years younger," says Miss Burney. "Her face, without positive beauty, had the most winning agreeability; her figure was remarkably elegant, her attire was chastely simple; her air was reserved, and her demeanour was dignified; her language had the same flowing perspicuity, and animated variety, by which it is marked in the best of her works; and her discourse was full of intelligence, yet wholly free from presumption or intrusion." Dr. Burney was forcibly struck with her, and his daughter was enchanted.

Madame De Genlis had with her the lovely Pamela, afterwards Lady Edward Fitzgerald, and on one occasion, when Miss Burney had, by appointment, been spending a morning with the Comtesse, the little girl, by a number of playful manœuvres, contrived to detain her in one particular position for a considerable time, when, to her great surprise, she found that a painter, in the room, had been employed in clandestinely taking her likeness, which, from a dislike to being exhibited, she had hitherto constantly refused to have done.

But though Madame De Genlis "warmly, and with predetermined partiality, sought the friendship of Miss Burney," yet so many unfavourable reports were put into circulation concerning her, that, "notwithstanding the most ardent admiration of her talents, and a zest yet greater for her engaging society, and elegantly lively and winning manners, she yet dared no longer

come within the precincts of her fascinating allurements."

Berquin was another foreigner who paid homage to Miss Burney's literary celebrity. "We had a droll interview enough," writes she; "he desired my mother to deliver the books, (L'Ami des Enfans,) 'to Ma'amselle,' with a thousand fine speeches, and never once suspected *I* was the *Ma'amselle*, though I was in the room all the time."

The favourable impression the Queen had received of Miss Burney from her venerable friend's account of her, having been confirmed by a personal acquaintance, one evening, which she was spending in St. James's Palace, Mr. Smelt, who belonged to the Queen's household, requested to speak with her in private, and to her very great astonishment, he communicated a message from her Majesty, offering her the situation of keeper of the robes, which had just become vacant by the resignation of Madame Haggerdorn. This was a confidential place immediately about the Queen's person, with apartments in the palace, a footman kept for her, together with other comforts, and 200*l.* a-year.

Miss Burney was surprised and almost bewildered at this offer, which was the more flattering, from its having been entirely unsolicited, and even unthought of by her, whilst it had been sought for earnestly by many women even of rank. After much hesitation on her own part, she appears to have been persuaded by her friends to accept the situation, and accordingly, in July, 1786, she was installed in her new office, and in her new apartments in the Queen's lodge at Windsor, or, as Horace Walpole describes it, was "royally gagged and promoted to fold muslins."

Though this appointment was highly creditable to the Queen's discernment, and a singular testimony to Miss Burney's merits, yet was it a situation little calculated for a woman of her habits and tone of feeling; moreover it entailed many privations,—an incessant attendance upon the royal person—a continued confinement to court—with no power over her own time, and not even the liberty to receive and pay visits without express permission.

By the Queen herself, and indeed by every member of the royal family, Miss Burney appears ever to have been treated with the greatest kindness and courtesy; but Madame Schwellenberg, the senior keeper of the robes, tried her powers of forbearance to the utmost, by her frequent ill-humour and tyranny.

Miss Burney's life at Windsor was monotonous in the extreme. She rose early, to be ready for her attendance on the Queen between seven and eight o'clock; after which she had a little time to herself, which was necessarily devoted to business, and to her wardrobe, a certain attention to dress being indispensable in her situation. She was again in attendance on her royal mistress about one, after which she had two hours to herself,—which she generally devoted to a journal which she kept for the amusement of her friends, and by the recent publication of which, so many amusing details of the interior of a royal ménage have been revealed to the public. At five she dined with Mrs. Schwellenberg, where a few guests were occasionally invited, and in the evening some of the equerries drank tea with the ladies. About eleven she was again summoned to the Queen, when she herself afterwards retired to bed—"and to sleep, too, believe me," says she; "the early

rising, and a long day's attention to new affairs and occupations, cause a fatigue so bodily, that nothing mental stands against it, and to sleep I fall the moment I have put out my candle, and laid down my head."

Miss Burney appears to have been not very well fitted for her office. She had been brought up too independently quite to relish the duties required of her, whilst at the same time, never having been used to the punctilios of a court, she appears often innocently to have infringed upon royal etiquette. Moreover, from being the petted, flattered, and caressed favourite of the literary circles, in which she had hitherto created such a sensation, she was here sunk into a dependent, in a subordinate situation, which, whilst to others it appeared highly honourable, she felt to be beneath that in which her abilities might fairly and justly entitle her to shine.

Her Majesty, who was "all sweetness and encouragement" to Miss Burney, does not appear to have exacted from her more punctuality or attention than any lady would expect from her immediate personal attendant; but, notwithstanding all her condescension and good nature, Miss Burney seems to have been anything but happy during her sojourn at Windsor. The constraint of a court, the numerous requisitions upon her time, but above all, the insolence of her colleague, and immediate superior, Mrs. Schwellenberg, all contributed to render her situation disagreeable to her; though, on account of the mortification her father would have experienced had she given it up, she appears to have endeavoured to reconcile herself to her "monastic seclusion."

The death (in 1788) of Mrs. Delany, to whom Miss Burney had been accustomed to confide all her troubles and grievances, and from whom she received the kindest attention, was a heavy loss to her, and her own health eventually beginning to suffer from the confinement she necessarily underwent in her attendance upon the Queen, her friends exhorted her father to advise her to give up her situation. "The matter, indeed," Boswell told her, "was puissantly discussed at THE CLUB, Charles Fox in the chair, where it was in contemplation to send a round robin to Dr. Burney, to recal his daughter to the world."

At last, after much hesitation, and with much reluctance, did Miss Burney resolve to leave Windsor, where, for five years, she had been treated by the royal family with the most marked and uniform friendship. At parting, which took place in July 1791, whilst she herself was melted into tears, the Queen, with weeping eyes, laid her fair hand upon her arm, repeatedly and gently wishing her well and happy.

By a tour to the west of England, and by the use of the Bath waters, the broken health of the invalid was at last restored.

It was at Norbury Park, the seat of her friends the Lockes, that Miss Burney was first introduced to General Alexander D'Arblay, one of the royalist refugees of the French Revolution, and the mutual attachment which was formed ended in a marriage, which took place on the 28th of July, 1793, at the village of Mickleham, where her sister, Mrs. Phillips, resided.

The newly-married pair immediately settled down quietly at Bookham in Surrey, where, in their domestic and fire-side enjoyment, they found the utmost felicity,

which was afterwards increased by the birth of a son, the late Reverend Alexander Charles Louis D'Arblay, who died before his mother, in January, 1837, after having been fellow of Christ College, Cambridge, and perpetual Curate of Camden Town Chapel.

Mrs. Crewe, the daughter of Dr. Burney's early friend, Mr. Greville, interesting herself greatly in the fate of the French clergy, of whom she had, at East Bourne, seen a great number wandering about in banishment and beggary, about this time, benevolently set on foot a plan for the amelioration of their condition, and Madame D'Arblay's pen was called upon to assist in the project. "The Address to the Ladies of Great Britain in favour of the Emigrant Priests," together with "Brief Reflections relative to the Emigrant Clergy," were accordingly written by her, and the profits arising from their sale were assigned to their benefit.

In 1795, a tragedy, entitled "Edwy and Elgiva," of Madame D'Arblay's composition, was brought out at Drury Lane Theatre, but was never subsequently published.

Madame D'Arblay now found herself obliged to exert her abilities for the benefit of her own immediate family, their pecuniary means being small, chiefly indeed confined to the 100*l.* per annum which the Queen assigned to her on quitting her situation at Windsor, and which she enjoyed for the rest of her life.

Accordingly, in 1796, was published by subscription, "Camilla, or a Picture of Youth," in five volumes. For this work she received three thousand guineas.

Though a pleasing and interesting work, and one which was extremely admired at the time of its publication, "Camilla" can scarcely be considered as equal

to Madame D'Arblay's more juvenile performances of "Evelina" and "Cecilia," nor indeed was it ever, perhaps, quite so popular as its predecessors, though much more profitable to the writer.

Shortly afterwards, with the money arising from the sale of "Camilla," the D'Arblays built a small cottage on a spot adjoining Norbury Park, according to a plan of General D'Arblay. It was called jokingly "Camilla Cottage," by Dr. Burney, but this name was afterwards generally adopted for it by their friends. In this pleasing retirement the D'Arblays spent some years previous to their leaving England for the Continent.

After the publication of Camilla, Mrs. Crewe was extremely anxious that Madame D'Arblay should undertake the management of a periodical paper, to be entitled "The Breakfast Table," in which she thought, by persiflage and ridicule, the Jacobinism of the day might be discountenanced. But the peculiar situation of her husband, with other circumstances, rendered this undertaking inexpedient, and she declined it; and the project, though it was to have been supported by Canning, Wyndham, and other distinguished persons, ultimately fell to the ground.

In the October of this year, Dr. Burney lost his second wife. By her, he had one son, Richard Thomas, who subsequently died in the East Indies, leaving a large family, and a daughter, Sarah Harriet, the authoress of several pleasing novels, &c.

On the 6th of January, 1800, at Park Gate, whilst on the road to visit her father at Chelsea College, died the third daughter of Dr. Burney, Susanna, Mrs. Phillips, who had long been in a declining state of health, to the

great grief of all her friends, but, in particular, of her sister, Madame d'Arblay, who, till the year 1813, regularly devoted the anniversary of her death to meditative commemoration; but at the exhortation of her father, she was subsequently induced to abandon this indulgence of morbid sensibility.

In 1802, at the peace of Amiens, the minister plenipotentiary sent over by Bonaparte chanced to be General Lauriston, a descendant of the famous Mississippi Law, and an old friend of General D'Arblay, who joyfully received his former comrade again, whom he had thought mingled with the slaughtered on the 10th of August. Through his mediation, a letter was conveyed to Berthier, then minister of war at Paris, and it was arranged, that on condition of General D'Arblay's serving a year in the Island of St. Domingo with General Le Clerc, the first husband of Napoleon's sister Pauline, he should be allowed to retire from the service with rank and promotion.

General D'Arblay, who had gone over to Paris on this occasion, having obtained leave to return to England to take leave of his wife and son, and to make arrangements for his departure to St. Domingo, wrote from thence a candid but somewhat indiscreet letter to Napoleon, in which he signified his intention never to bear arms against the country of his wife, after which he embarked for France, in February, 1802. The consequences were, that his commission was annulled, much to his annoyance, though to the joy of Madame D'Arblay, who contemplated with dismay his expedition to so unhealthy a climate as St. Domingo. Notwithstanding his displeasure, the Emperor, however, carried his resentment no farther than the saying to La Fayette, who

interceded for him, "Il m'a ecrit un diable de lettre!" but stopping with a smile, half gay, half cynical, he continued, "However, I ought only to regard in it the husband of Cecilia!"

General D'Arblay determined to remain at least a twelvemonth in France, in order to evince his readiness to serve, in case of any change of mind on the part of the Emperor; and he therefore desired to be joined by his wife and son, intending, at the end of the year, to return to his quiet seclusion at West Hamble. Madame D'Arblay, therefore, left England in April, 1802, having first had the honour of a parting interview with their Majesties, who entirely approved of her following the fortunes of the man to whom she had given her hand.

In the mean time war broke forth again; and the D'Arblays were compelled to remain in France, where the next ten years of their life were spent. Madame D'Arblay's correspondence with her family was now necessarily curtailed, and became both uncertain and unfrequent. Their letters by post were unsealed, and those by private hands undirected, their contents, of course, being brief and unsatisfactory, on account of Madame D'Arblay's fear of compromising her husband's safety.

In 1812, whilst the Emperor Napoleon was absent in Russia, General D'Arblay with difficulty procured a passport for his wife and son to leave France, which, had Napoleon been there, would have been utterly impossible. After six weeks' detention at Dunkirk, they were landed at Deal from an American vessel, which was captured, though, as English, they were immediately set at liberty.

However rejoiced Madame D'Arblay would naturally

feel at returning to her native land, she had, notwithstanding the peculiarity of her situation, been both cordially received, and treated with a warmth of friendship in France, that did credit to the heads and hearts of those who became acquainted with her. She also formed intimacies with a chosen few, among whom Madame de Maisoneuve is particularly specified by her, as her "faithful, chosen, and tender friend."

Twelve years had naturally wrought their usual changes in her family, and Madame D'Arblay found her father, grown old and feeble, still residing in his apartments in Chelsea College, which, indeed, he now never quitted. Her eldest brother had just completed his "General History of Voyages to the South Sea;" her second, was considered to be the third best Greek scholar in the kingdom, Porson and Parr being alone his superiors; whilst her sisters, Mrs. Burney and Mrs. Broome, were surrounded by blooming young families; and her half-sister, Sarah Harriet, was rising in reputation as a novel writer.

On the 12th of April, 1814, the day succeeding a general illumination in honour of the glorious victory of England and her allies over the Emperor Napoleon, Dr. Burney, in his eighty-seventh year, breathed his last; his affectionate daughter, Madame D'Arblay, being by his side, where she had remained during the whole of the preceding night; while rockets and distant fireworks were illuminating the sky, and presenting a singular contrast to the chamber of sickness and death.

In the same year appeared "The Wanderer," by Madame D'Arblay, a novel in five volumes, founded on incidents arising partly out of the French Revolution, the notes of which she took with her to France when

she quitted England, in 1802. For the copyright of this work she received 1,500*l.*; but whether the taste of the public was altered, or that her magic pen had lost its virtue in a foreign land, this work certainly never attained to the popularity of her preceding publications.

On the 3rd of May, 1818, Madame D'Arblay had the misfortune to lose her husband, General D'Arblay, who died at Bath. He was a general in the French service, and had been made one of the Legion of Honour by Louis XVIII. He originally came over to England in the early part of the French Revolution with Talleyrand, Lally Tollendal, and other distinguished French emigrants.

In 1826, Madame D'Arblay had an interview with Sir Walter Scott, and the following is an account given of it by himself, in his interesting Diary, 1826, November 18:—"Was introduced by Rogers to Madame D'Arblay, the celebrated authoress of 'Evelina' and 'Cecilia;' an elderly lady, with no remains of beauty, but with a simple and gentle manner, a pleasing expression of countenance, and apparently quiet feelings. She told me she had wished to see two persons—myself, of course, being one, the other George Canning.

"Madame D'Arblay told us that the common story of Dr. Burney, her father, having brought home her own first work, and recommended it to her perusal, was erroneous. Her father was in the secret of 'Evelina' being printed. But the following circumstance may have given rise to the story:—"Dr. Burney was at Streatham soon after the publication, where he found Mrs. Thrale recovering from her confinement, low at the moment, and out of spirits. While they were talking together, Johnson, who sat beside in a kind of

reverie, suddenly broke out, 'You should read this new work, madam—you should read 'Evelina;' every one says it is excellent, and they are right."* The delighted father obtained a commission from Mrs. Thrale to purchase his daughter's work, and retired the happiest of men. Madame D'Arblay said she was wild with joy at this decisive evidence of her literary success, and that she could only give vent to her rapture by dancing and skipping round a mulberry-tree in the garden. She was very young at this time. I trust I shall see this lady again."

In 1832, Madame D'Arblay published the memoirs of her father, in three volumes, arranged from his own manuscripts, from family papers, and from personal recollections.

After the death of her son, which took place in 1837, Madame D'Arblay withdrew almost entirely from general society, admitting none but relations and intimate friends. Notwithstanding her advanced age, however, her conversational powers and her faculties remained unimpaired till within a short time of her decease, which took place in her house in Lower Grosvenor-street, on the 6th of January, 1840, in her eighty-eighth year. Her remains were deposited, by her own express desire, in Walcot Churchyard, in Bath, near those of her husband, General D'Arblay, and her only son, Alexander Charles Louis D'Arblay.

* This account does not correspond with that given by Madam D'Arblay, in her "Diary," &c. now in the course of publication. She there states that "Evelina" was first read by Dr. Johnson, at the recommendation of Mrs. Thrale. Of course the latter version is the correct one. But we allow the other to stand, as a literary curiosity, professing, as it does, to be reported from the lips of the lady herself, and by so celebrated a person as "the author of Waverley."

It may be observed, in conclusion, that Madame D'Arblay's productions were among the first of their class possessing merit and popularity, which might unhesitatingly be placed in the hands of youth; and though not professedly writing for the instruction of her readers, she, at all times and in all places, advocates and advances the cause of religion, morality, and good principles; and notwithstanding her undergoing that greates of trials to the sobriety of the mind, a sudden transition from obscurity to fame and celebrity, yet did she never fail steadily to fulfil her social duties in a most exemplary manner: she was a dutiful daughter, an affectionate sister, a devoted wife, and a faithful friend.

WORKS.

Evelina; or, the History of a Young Lady's First Introduction to the World, 1778.

Cecilia; or, Memoirs of an Heiress, 1781.

Camilla; or, a Picture of Youth, 1796.

Address to the Ladies of Great Britain, &c.

Brief Reflections relative to the Emigrant Clergy, 1795.

The Wanderer, 1814.

Memoirs of Dr. Burney, 1832.

Diary and Letters, edited by her Niece, 1842.

MRS. GRANT, OF LAGGAN.

ANNE MAC VICAR, afterwards so well known as Mrs. Grant of Laggan, was born at Glasgow in the February of the year 1755. On her mother's side she was descended from the ancient family of Stewart of Invernahyle, in Argyleshire. Her father, Mr. Mac Vicar, was an officer in the British army, and shortly after her birth he accompanied his regiment, the 55th infantry, to America, under the auspices of the Earl of Eglintoun, with the intention of eventually settling there, should he find sufficient inducement for so doing. He was subsequently joined by his wife and infant daughter.

In alluding to this country, many years afterwards, she says, "I was fond of it to enthusiasm, and spent the most delightful and fanciful period of my life in it, for mine was a very premature childhood. The place where I resided was the most desirable in the whole continent; there my first perceptions of pleasure, and there my earliest habits of thinking, were formed; and from thence I drew that high relish for the sublime simplicity of nature which has ever accompanied me. This has been the means of preserving a certain humble

dignity in all the difficulties I have had to struggle through."

In a situation so remote as our American colonies, at that period, might be considered to be, there were, of course, but few advantages for the education of young persons, and Miss Mac Vicar was constrained, from circumstances, to obtain her's as she best could. By her mother she was taught to work and read; and so apt and diligent a scholar did she prove, that before she had entered her sixth year, she had perused, and was well acquainted with, the contents of the Old Testament.

From an old sergeant in a Scottish regiment, she received her only lessons in penmanship; he, observing her love of reading, one day made her a present of a copy of Blind Harry's "Wallace," which, by his assistance, she was enabled not only to decypher, but also to understand and to appreciate; and her admiration for the heroism of Wallace and his companions kindled in her breast that enthusiasm for Scotland, which, as she herself expressed it, remained ever after with her, as a principle of life.

Of the Dutch language she early obtained a knowledge, and was enabled to speak it, in consequence of having been domesticated in her childhood for some time with a family of Dutch colonists, in the state of New York.

Her fondness for literature was soon generally observed by her father's friends, and an officer in his regiment conferred on her an inestimable treasure, by presenting her with a copy of Milton's Paradise Lost, which, young as she was, she perused with the greatest interest; and to its diligent study Mrs. Grant ascribed the formation of her taste and character, observing, that,

whatever she had of elevation of spirit, expansion of mind, or taste for the sublime and beautiful, she owed to her familiarity with Milton. The effect of this became so evident in her conversation and habits, as even at this tender age to secure for her the notice of several of the most eminent settlers in the state of New York.

In her own immediate family, Miss Mac Vicar's literary tastes received but little encouragement. By her mother she was doomed to spend hour after hour in needlework, an employment possibly very necessary to the limited income of a subaltern officer; whilst her father's religious prejudices, amounting, when sick, even to enthusiasm, occasionally would induce him to issue forth the (to her) terrible decree, that she was henceforth to read "no more idle books or plays."

Mr. Mac Vicar was at this time a subaltern in the 55th regiment, which was stationed at Oswego, on Lake Ontario, but in consequence of the then troubled state of the country, his wife and daughter were at first left below Albany. On his being sent thither to purchase stores for his regiment, they accompanied him on his return to his quarters, a perilous journey for females, but with which Miss Mac Vicar was greatly delighted; "it was a change, from sitting pinned to her sampler by her mother till the hour of play, and then running wild with children as young and still simpler than herself." She also found herself the object of much attention, and was of course not a little flattered with her new-found importance.

At Schenectady the party embarked, and proceeded up the river in six bateaux, to one of the most charming scenes imaginable, where was built Fort Hendrick, so termed in compliment to the principal Sachem, or King

of the Mohawks, whose palace stood on an eminence, surrounded by palisades.

They did not fail to wait upon his majesty, whom they found sitting on the floor, beside a large heap of wheat, surrounded by baskets of dried berries; whilst his son, a pretty boy, was caressing a young foal which had unceremoniously intruded into the royal presence. "The monarch smiled," she says, "clapped her head, and ordered her a little basket, very pretty, and filled by the officious kindness of his son with dried berries. Never did princely gifts, or the smile of royalty, produce more ardent admiration and profound gratitude. Indeed," adds Mrs. Grant, "I am not sure but that I liked kings all my life the better for the royal specimen to which I was so early introduced."

After many delays to their journey, they finally reached Fort Oswego. Here she found the confinement, and the long tasks incident to a deep fall of snow, an ill exchange for the freedom of her forest life; and as an amusement, she used to study the Old Testament as a story-book, being too young at that period to derive much other benefit from it. Wallace, and Welwood's Memoirs of the History of England, were her next acquisitions.

When once the winter set in, Oswego became a perfect Siberia, cut off even from all intelligence of what was passing in the world. But at last, "spring returned with its showers," and converted their frozen and forlorn retreat at once into an uncultured Eden, rich in all the charms of sublime scenery. "It is in her central retreat," says Mrs. Grant, "amidst the mighty waters of the West, that nature seems in solitary grandeur to have chosen her most favoured habitation, remote from

the ocean, whose waves bear the restless sons of Europe on their voyages of discovery, invasion, and intrusion. * * * It is in the depths of these forests, and around those sea-like lakes, that Nature has been purposely kind, and discovers more charms the more her shady veil is withdrawn from her noble features. If ever the fond illusions of poets and philosophers—that Atalantis, that new Arcadia, that safe and serene Utopia, whose ideal quiet and happiness have so often charmed in theory—if ever this dream of social bliss, in some new-planted region, is to be realized, this unrivalled scene of grandeur and fertility bids fairest to be the place of its abode. Here the climate is serene and equal; the rigorous winters that brace the frame and call forth the powers of mind and body to prepare for its approach, are succeeded by a spring so rapid, the exuberance of vernal bloom bursts forth so suddenly, after the disappearance of those deep snows which cherish and fructify the earth, that the change seems like a magical delusion."

The Indian war, which broke out in 1762, occasioned the detention of the 55th regiment in America till 1765, during all which time the garrison was commanded by Colonel Duncan, who seems to have taken paternal pride in the comfort and the improvement of those under his care, inciting them to study, and engaging them in agricultural and horticultural pursuits, combined with hunting, shooting, and fishing, to vary their employments.

Mr. Mac Vicar, however, was sent again to Albany, to purchase stores, and, accompanied by his family, he returned by his former route, stopping at Fort Brewerston, where his little daughter, being captivated by the

copperplates in an edition of "Paradise Lost," put before her for her amusement, Captain Campbell, when they were taking their leave, said, "Keep that book, my dear child; I foretell that the time will come when you will find pleasure in it." "Never," says Mrs. Grant, "did a present produce such joy and gratitude. I thought I was dreaming, and looked at it a hundred times before I could believe anything so fine was really my own. I tried to read it, and almost cried with vexation when I found I could not understand it. At length I quitted it in despair; yet always said to myself, 'I shall be wiser next year.'"

The next year (1762) found the little damsel shut up in the fort, with no companion, and never suffered to go out without her mother, and even this indulgence very seldom granted. All the forenoons she sat and sewed, and in the evenings, when others went to play, she was generally sent up into a large waste room, to learn by heart some grave and repulsive lesson.

She now again applied to her Milton, and by the aid of an old tattered Bailey's Dictionary, which accidentally lay there, and with the assistance of any one who would attend to her, she gradually understood and became attached to that divine poet, and the waste room, once a gloomy prison in her mind, became converted into the scene of all her enjoyment. She had, at this time, attained eight years of age, and was entirely uneducated, excepting in reading and needlework. But when company came, and she was sent out of the way, she flew to her solitude with rapture.

Here she often heard of the fame of Madame Schuyler, at this time residing principally at Albany, her former home, the Flats, having been burnt down in

1759. Having courteously invited the Scotch strangers, who had moved to a house next door to her own, to spend an evening with her, the little Mac Vicar was astonished and filled with awe and reverence when first introduced into the presence of so august a personage.

"In the course of the evening," she says, "dreams began to be spoken of, and every one in turn gave their opinion, with regard to that wonderful mode in which the mind acts independent of the senses, asserting its immaterial nature in a manner the most conclusive. I mused and listened, till at length the spirit of quotation (which very early began to haunt me) moved me to repeat, from Paradise Lost,

> "When nature rests,
> Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes
> To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,
> Wild work produces oft."

"I sat silent when my bolt was shot, but so did not madame. Astonished to hear her favourite author quoted readily by so mere a child, she attached much more importance to the circumstance than it deserved; so much so, indeed, that, long after, she used to repeat it to strangers in my presence, by way of accounting for the great fancy she had taken to me."

Although peace had been for some time established in Europe, America had not yet settled down into perfect quiet, and the newly-acquired territory of Canada required all the care and prudence of Sir Jeffery, afterwards Lord Amherst, the then commander-in-chief. This was the more necessary in consequence of a mutiny, which took place amongst the British troops, who now found themselves treated with coldness and suspi-

cion by those who were previously dependent upon them for protection. The Indian war, however, which shortly afterwards broke out, for some time occupied all attention.

The guard-house was opposite to Madame Schuyler's, and on the occasion of the mutiny, Miss Mac Vicar beheld the extraordinary spectacle of all the soldiers laying down their arms, and refusing to take them up, as was simultaneously done in various other places. Sir Jeffery Amherst, by his calm and dispassionate address, however, soon quelled this incipient disaffection, and the crafty Pondiac, the chief of the Indians in the neighbourhood of the lakes, by his sudden attack upon Fort Detroit, having caused great alarm in the provinces, the soldiers were again looked up to for protection and safety, and military preparations and arrangements were carried on with all possible activity.

'When this Indian war, after causing great disquiet, boundless expense, and bloodshed, came to an end, Miss Mac Vicar was witness to the joyful ceremonies of the conclusion of peace, and of the mutual exchange of children, which in the course of predatory excursions were frequently carried off by the enemy,—a day engraven in indelible characters upon her memory. It took place at Albany, and as in many cases the Indians had become extremely attached to their little captives, many touching scenes took place between the mothers who recognized their long-lost offspring, and the adopted parents who were obliged to resign them, to whom they fondly clung, unknowing of any other, and from whom they were only separated with heart-piercing shrieks.

The 55th regiment now again prepared to embark for their native land, to which they were enthusiastically

attached, and Mr. Mac Vicar, having obtained a valuable portion of land, made up his mind to settle in America, though he accompanied his corps to New York.

In the summer, Mr. Mac Vicar proceeded to his location, which was considered to be a most fertile and valuable estate, consisting of dry land, without any swamp, through which passed a beautiful stream, where the beavers had already cleared for them thirty acres of good hay land. And now the "Township of Clarendon," as their property was termed, was to repay them for all former troubles.

But all these hopes of the golden age again returning proved illusive. The Stamp Act and its subsequent repeal began to set the public mind in a ferment, and Mr. Mac Vicar became so disgusted with the scenes around him, and with the lawless invasion of his rights, by those who daringly questioned the legality of his claims, that it caused him a serious fit of illness, and eventually he resolved to return to Scotland.

The river Connecticut had long been considered as the boundary of the state of New York, when the limits of property were not accurately defined. But now arose a fierce set of Republicans and Squatters, who insisted that the real line of demarcation was twenty miles farther from the river, and that, consequently, all the patents, including that of "the Township of Clarendon," were null and void. They ultimately carried the day, rather by force than by argument, and the little etate of Vermont was formed out of this debateable land, from which were eventually expelled the original English settlers.

Previous to this, however, Mr. Mac Vicar and his

family had regularly settled themselves at Clarendon, though his daughter was allowed to spend her winter with her kind friend, Madame Schuyler, at Albany.

Miss Mac Vicar's summers, however, were passed in the seclusion of Clarendon, whither she carried for her amusement a few volumes of Shakspeare, which, when at the Flats, she used to read on a raft of wood which was drifting down to Albany, but which had become, as was often the case, shelved on the banks of the river. On one occasion, whilst compassionating the sorrows of Othello, sitting on a plank wrapt in attention, on accidentally raising her eyes, she beheld a long serpent on the same board at her elbow, in a threatening attitude, with its head lifted up. Othello and his young admirer ran off together, and on examination, it was found she had actually been studying in the midst of serpents, a nest with seven eggs being discovered under the very plank she had been wont to select for her favourite seat.

Their voyage down the Hudson was, by contrary winds, protracted to a whole week, and Miss Mac Vicar's grief at quitting her friend Madame Schuyler was soothed by the far-famed beauties of the river, and at New York she was charmed with the easy gaiety and social kindness that then prevailed; though even then the spirit of discord was ready to burst forth, and their slumbers would occasionally be broken by intoxicated electors thundering at their doors to demand a vote for a favourite candidate.

The following is the account Mrs. Grant wrote to one of her numerous correspondents in 1773, whilst the recollection of her virtues was still fresh in her memory, of the origin of her introduction to her revered friend, Madame Schuyler. "In the eighth year of my age

we removed from the fort, to make room for some other regiment. Lodging next this good lady in town, I took a great fancy to a beautiful child, a relation whom she was bringing up in the house; and my father attracted Madame Schuyler's notice by his piety, not very frequently a distinguishing feature in the military character. I will not tire you with the detail of all the little circumstances that gradually acquired me the place in her favour which I ever continued to possess. She saw me reading "Paradise Lost" with delighted attention; she was astonished to see a child take pleasure in such a book, and no less so to observe, that I loved to sit thoughtful by her, and hear the conversations of elderly and grave people. My father, on leaving the army, took a small farm of her's: she grew still more attached to me, and I lived with her two winters. She professed a desire to keep me entirely, if my parents would part with me. I was admitted to the honour of being her constant companion, slept in her room, and was entertained with many interesting details, which to hear did I, like Desdemona, 'seriously incline,' and she was gratified with my attention. Whatever culture my mind has received I owe to her. Beyond the knowledge of my first duties I should scarce have proceeded, or rather, I should have become almost savage, in a retreat which precluded me from the advantages of society, as well as those of education."

Mrs. Grant, in her letters, has also given a sketch of the useful and happy life of this estimable and singular character, the friend of her childhood, the instructress of her youth, and the existing model, in her mind, of the highest practical virtue.

"Madame, or Aunt Schuyler,—for so, by universal

consent, she was indiscriminately called, in the province of New York,—was daughter to one of the first and most respectable characters existing in that province, when it fell under the dominion of the English. His name was Cuyler, and his descendants are still numerous and prosperous in that country, to which prosperity my friend's wisdom and goodness contributed not a little. This Cuyler was the person who brought over the four Mohawk kings, who were mentioned by the Spectator as exciting so much wonder in England. He was introduced to Queen Anne, and had several conversations with her. She offered to knight him, but he refused, not choosing an elevation unusual in that country, which would make an invidious distinction betwixt him and his friends.

"Some years after his return, his daughter Catalina, then about eighteen, was married to Colonel Schuyler, who possessed an estate in Albany, in the direction which led to the vicinity of the French and the hostile Indians. He was a person whose calm, temperate wisdom, singular probity, and thorough knowledge of the affairs and interests of the bordering nations, had given him a very great influence, not only in his own province, but among the Indians and Canadian French, whose respective languages he spoke fluently. He was wealthy, and very generous, and so public-spirited, that though he did all in his power to prevent war, being in fact, a

"Lover of peace, and friend of human kind,"

yet, when he saw it inevitable, he raised a regiment at his own expense, and was the first who gave character or energy to the provincial troops.

"To detail instances of public virtue in this truly

great and good man, would, in fact, be giving the history of the province during his life-time. From the place where he lived, he stood, as it were, a barrier between the Indians and the inhabitants. Of high and distinguished utility was this mild, philosophic, and christian character; yet, unless he had met a congenial mind, he could neither have done so much good, nor prevented so much evil. Luckily for the public, they had no family; therefore, greatly resembling each other, both in taste and inclination, and intellectual powers, their efforts were all directed one way.

"At that time there were not many settlers in the province who were acquainted with the English language; and these generally entertained a rooted prejudice, nay, aversion, to the very army which came to protect them. In the hospitality, intelligence, and pleasing conversation of this very worthy pair, these officers always found a refuge; from them they met with cordial kindness, sound advice, and useful information.

"Petty and crooked policy was unknown in this patriarchal family, where a succession of adopted children, judiciously educated, and a number of domestic slaves, very kindly and tenderly treated, formed a happy community, who were directed with such prudence, that they left leisure to their rulers for beneficence still more widely diffused, and for studies of the most useful nature."

"They had three objects in view, besides the great primary one of making their large family as good, and wise, and happy as possible; the first was, to prevent injustice being done to the Indians, to conciliate their affections, and to ameliorate their condition; the second,

to alleviate the hardships and difficulties to which the British troops were exposed, from marching into unknown wildernesses, by receiving them into their family, making them acquainted with the nature of the country, and the manner of managing the stubborn tempers of the boorish inhabitants, avoiding ambushes, and reconciling Indian nations to our government. On these occasions, they would accommodate in the house those officers whose morals and manners recommended them most, and also gave the parties of soldiers, as they passed, a lodging in their offices, and an abundant supply of milk and vegetables.

"The third object to which their wisdom and humanity were directed was, the protection and comfort of new settlers, on their neighbouring boundary, to whom they were ever ready to extend a helping hand, both in the way of advice and assistance. Indeed, so well did they understand the interests and defence of their growing colony, and the important frontier in which they lived, that every new governor always came up to consult them, and no public measure was thought safe till the colonel approved of it.

"In the mean time, their house was an academy for morals, for manners, and for solid knowledge. There the best company was always to be met; there the most important topics were discussed dispassionately and fully; there conversation, properly so called, was cultivated and tasted. The little embellishments and elegancies of life, perhaps, had no great share in these discussions, but she,

> 'Whose mind was moral as the preacher's tongue,
> And strong to wield all science worth the name,'

was well skilled in the Holy Scriptures, and intimately

acquainted with the writings of the best divines and historians. I say she, for the colonel died before I knew her, after they had lived forty years together, in unexampled happiness, and reared (from the time of their being weaned, till they were married, or launched out into active life) fifteen nieces, nephews, or other relatives, several of whom have since been distinguished both for their merit and their uncommon success in various pursuits.

"Soon after the death of her lamented partner, Madame Schuyler removed to the town of Albany, that she might more freely enjoy her choice of society,—people, whom experience in the world, or superior attainments, made suitable associates for a mind so sound and so enlightened. Her husband had left her all his possessions. The use she made of her wealth was to keep a kind of open table for strangers who were in any respect worthy of admittance, and to educate, in succession, the children of different relations of her beloved consort."

Such was the lady with whom the most happy days of Miss Mac Vicar's childhood were passed, and by whom her mind was formed, and trained in the habits of virtue and reflection.

Miss Mac Vicar's father had, with the view of permanently settling in America, received a large grant of land there, already alluded to, to which he made several valuable additions by purchase. But when, on falling into bad health, he was advised and determined to leave that country, he did it so precipitately that he had not time to dispose of his property there. Soon afterwards the revolutionary war broke out, when it was confiscated, and thus the chief means of providing for

the support of his family were cut off; and thus ended, as Mrs. Grant observes, " The History of an Heiress." He returned to Scotland, with his wife and daughter, about the year 1768, and a few years afterwards he was appointed barrack-master at Fort Augustus, in the county of Inverness.

The Mac Vicars set out from Balclutha (Glasgow) in April 1773, for their highland abode on the banks of Loch Ness. Of the commencement of their journey Miss Mac Vicar gives the following account:—

" We left Balclutha so mournful, 'thin darkness covered our beauty, and we looked forth from our hill, like half-seen stars, through the rainy clouds of night. The sigh of the manly youths awaited our departure, and we went away, very sad indeed.' I am sure if St. Mungo's spire were capable of gratitude, it owes me some, for the many sad looks I cast back at it. I shall ever love my dear native Balclutha, not only for what I have enjoyed, but for what I suffered in it. What I have suffered was the common lot of humanity; what I have enjoyed was much more, for who ever had such friends as mine?"

They proceeded on their way, the whole party lost in meditation, " till the sight of Loch Lomond roused us. What a happy faculty is an active imagination to combat the evils of sickly sensibility! I passed over all the beautiful groves and corn-fields that adorn the lower side, for I had seen such things before, and they brought images of happiness and tranquillity which my mind could not relish in its depressed state. But the solemn and melancholy grandeur of the lofty dark mountains, and abrupt rocks tufted with heath and juniper, that rose on the other side of the lake, and

seemed to close its upper end, arrested my attention at once. I peopled their narrow and gloomy glens with those vindictive clans, that used to make such fatal incursions of old. I thought I saw Bruce and his faithful few ascending them, in his forced flight from Bute. A train of departed heroes seemed to pass in their clouds in long review; and, do but guess who closed the procession?—no other than the notorious Rob Roy,* riding up the Loch side with the lady he forced away, and the 'twenty men in order,' who make such a figure in the ballad. My mother knew the family, and tells the whole history of the transaction. The lady, it would appear, was too delicate a subject for such a rough adventure, for she died of grief soon after."

As the travellers drew near Loch Ayr, they had a glimpse of Barabreak, familiar to the writer, as the often-described abode of her ancestors. "Here," continues she, "we had a long detail of their simple manner of life, their humble virtues, and the affectionate confidence that subsisted between them and their copartners in the same profession. My father delighted to show us the stream where he first caught a trout, and the little island which had been the object of his first excursion in search of nuts and raspberries; and I listened with delight to tales of other times, told with so much animation; I felt as proud of the genuine worth and unstained probity of my ancestors, as if they had been all that the world admires and envies, and only wished that I might not prove unworthy of them."

Having seen and admired the princely abode of the Duke of Argyle, at Inverary, on the banks of Loch

* Rob Roy Macgregor, the leader of a train of banditti, the last person in Scotland who carried off an heiress forcibly.

Fyne, they continued their route to Oban, across the Mona Lia, or Grey Mountain, an endless moor, without any road but a small footpath through which the guide conducted with difficulty their horses, and which, the very region of storms and clouds, the imagination of Miss Mac Vicar peopled with "fleeting spectres, and half-seen visions, melting into grey mist."

"Our friend the collector's dwelling-house formed part of the custom-house," continues Miss Mac Vicar; "it stands on the verge of this fine bay. The tide flows up to the door, but retires half a mile back, and discovers a scene very new and amusing to me, who have never been at the sea-side, except in embarking and debarking. Vast stones, where the footing is difficult, mixed with gravel, shells, and sea-weed, compose the extensive beach, which the ebbing sea leaves naked. I purpose indulging my delight in overcoming difficulties, and exploring odd places and odd things, by many a walk in pursuit of the retreating sea-nymphs; for you must know it is settled I am to stay till June, when the collector and Mary (his daughter) are to conduct me to Fort William, where my father will meet me. I am glad of it; I shall not be kept so busy, and have more society and amusement."

Of Kilmore, four miles from Oban, where they attended divine service, she says, "This was an odd old church, almost ruinous. But when the preacher came in he roused all my attention. I never beheld a countenance so keenly expressive, nor such dark piercing eyes; he is very like his sister, (the celebrated Flora Macdonald,) and resembles her in a superior musical genius, being a distinguished composer, as well as performer on the violin. When I began to look about, the

dresses and countenances of the people presented new matter of speculation. This is certainly a fine country to grow old in; I could not spare a look to the young people, so much was I engrossed in contemplating their grandmothers." * * *

"The old people, treated with unwearied tenderness and veneration, feel no diminution of their consequence, no chill in their affections: strangers to neglect, they are also strangers to suspicion. The young readily give to old age that cordial, by which they hope to be supported when their own almond-trees begin to blossom." * *

"Observe, moreover, that they serve for song-books, and circulating libraries, so faithfully do they preserve, and so accurately detail, 'the details of the times of old,' and the songs of the bards that now strike the viewless harp on wandering clouds. All this, with their constant cheerfulness, make them the delight of the *very young*, in the happy period of wonder and simplicity; and finding themselves so, prevents their being peevish and querulous. Ossian was never more mistaken than when he said, 'Age is dark and unlovely;' here it appears 'like the setting moon on the western wave,' and we bless the brightness of its departure.

"I was waked out of the pleasing reverie which the sight of so many fine ancients inspired, by the beadle's coming to the seat to ask if I had Gaelic, because if I had not, there was to be an English discourse. Judge of my self-importance in having a sermon preached for my very self!"

A storm having driven the King's wherry back to Oban, in which Mr. and Mrs. Mac Vicar had set out to Fort Augustus, their daughter was seized with the strongest desire to accompany them, which she accordingly did.

At Fort William they spent a few days with Mr. Gray, who held there some official situation; and which place Miss Mac Vicar describes as a seaport without being animated,—a village without the air of peace and simplicity,—military without being either gay or bold-looking,—country, without being rural,—highland, without being picturesque or romantic,—with plains without verdure, hills without woods, mountains without majesty, and a sky without a sun.

After a few days' rest, Mr. and Mrs. Mac Vicar, accompanied by their host, Mr. Gray, set off on horseback from Fort William, to cross the Glenmore, a great valley or opening from sea to sea, now connected by the Caledonian Canal, through the wildest parts of the highlands. Mr. Mac Vicar had preceded them in order to prepare for their arrival at Fort Augustus.

Their route lay over brown and unvaried moors, along the banks of the river and Loch Lochy, the former of which, running westwards, discharges into Loch Innhe, at the old castle of Inverlochy, of which Miss Mac Vicar says:

"You never saw such a castle in your life; I mused the whole night after I saw it, on the strange manner in which the inhabitants must have lived. It is large and square, and has the remains of four round towers. It is built of round stones that were never touched by the hammer. You may guess its venerable antiquity from the circumstance of Achaius, 'our gude Scots king' having signed a league with Charlemagne here, in the eighth century.

"Only think how kings could choose such a residence. But they were great hunters, and the dark moors in

view were all a forest then. The sea running up so far into the mountains."

After passing the centre of the Glenmore, where the waters divide, Miss Mac Vicar observes, "I was much pleased to find woody hills and green plain, narrow but beautiful, opening before me. Lagganachadrom charmed me; it seemed so rural, so peaceful, and so social. Thinking what innocent sylvan beings dwelt in those huts, I contemplated them with secret pleasure. * * * Lost in contemplation, we were enjoying this pastoral scenery, when we were interrupted with, 'The greatest thieves in all the country live in these houses.' We were shocked, but found, upon inquiry, that this sweet hamlet was really inhabited by the only remaining horde of those plunderers, who used to consider making a *spreath* as a gallant exploit. Now, a spreath was carrying away forcibly a herd of cattle, and fighting their way through all opposition. I felt a kind of horror on finding that the cluster of innocent peasants' cottages I had been admiring was merely a den of thieves."

The travellers at last reached Fort Augustus, "a miniature of New York as to situation—upon a very small scale," almost insulated by the mountain streams, the Oich from Glengarry and the Tarffe from the Coryarich, on the north and the south, with Loch Ness on the east, forming a noble boundary, with its pier, and solitary vessel, which the vastness of the surrounding objects diminished to a toy.

In a still more rural scene, a little to the north, on a projecting point at the junction of the Oich with the lake, stood her father's house, surrounded with tall ash trees and gardens. "The serene grandeur of this lake

in a calm is not to be described. Bold, steep mountains rise on the south side; little retiring bays and sloping woods give variety to the north; and the reflection is so fine; nothing interrupts it for twenty-five miles, at the end of which, the lake discharges, through the short rapid river Ness, into the Murray Firth. The immediate scene, in short, is tranquil and beautiful, while the surrounding objects are all rude and majestic."

In this remote and retired spot did Miss Mac Vicar spend several years, varied by a little excursion to the celebrated Fall of Fyers, a trip to Blair Atholl, and a visit to Inverness, the northern capital, a cheerful looking place, with good society, and frequent assemblies, superior to those of Glasgow, being attended by the families of the neighbouring gentry, whose great distance from the metropolis caused them to make that town the scene of their winter amusements.

Of their own society at Fort Augustus, she observes, "Reading, walking, and all speculative and solitary amusements, you know, can be enjoyed here as well as in town. You have no idea how townified folks are, in all these little garrisons, and how these small circles, which necessity has driven together, ape the manners of the great world, that they have reluctantly left behind. We, too, have our visits, our scandal, brought from thirty miles distant, our tittle-tattle, our jealousies, our audible whispers, and secrets that everybody knows. Not to dwell on each minute particular, believe that our handful of antiquated beaux and rusticated belles just do everything in the country that yours do in town, only with more languor and ill-humour."

She, however, took pleasure in the contemplation of the natural beauties with which she was surrounded,

and after complaining of having no one to admire them with her, says, "I feel my mind rise to a kind of melancholy greatness—but I think I should rejoice once more if I met with one that tasted all this that I do. Nobody will understand me. I cannot blame them. I am too rustic, too simple at least for people of this world, with whom manner is everything, and though myself uneducated, I painfully feel I have too much refinement, too much delicacy for uninformed people, with whom I feel no point of union but simplicity. * * * The retired manner in which I have been brought up, equally remote from the refined artifice of higher life, and the necessary activity and confined notions of the mob, have nourished my peculiarities. So has the little company I have kept; these were of the same primitive cast, and lay under the same disadvantage of being equally unfit for vulgar, and what the world calls elegant society. The mournful event to which you are no stranger,* blasting the flattering picture of felicity which my heart had so fondly indulged, fixed in my mind a cast of pensive thought, which has been alternately sustained by the tenderness of friendship and the reveries of solitude; so that I am now neither fit for any other situation, nor desirous of a change, lest it should prove

'A bitter change—severer for severe.'"

A change of a more pleasing nature than she had anticipated, however, took place eventually in her situation, as in the month of May, 1779, she was united to the Rev. James Grant, Chaplain to the Fort, a young clergyman of accomplished mind and manners, connected

* The death of a young friend.

with some of the most respectable families in the neighbourhood.

Two months after their marriage they went to the village of Laggan, in Badenoch, Invernesshire, of which place Mr. Grant had been appointed minister, and took up their abode in "the Pastor's Cottage," which was "literally pastoral," situated in the centre of a vale, through which ran the clear and rapid Spey, and at the foot of a mountain which screened it from the north wind. It was twenty-five miles distant from Fort Augustus, from which it was separated by another immense mountain called Coryarich, a barrier impassable during the winter months, when its top was veiled in clouds, and the descent particularly dangerous, and subject to whirlwinds and eddies that gave rise to the traditional belief of its being inhabited by an evil spirit.

The pastor's cottage was so far removed from a market, that they were necessitated to have a farm which afforded them every necessary of life; for its superfluities, such as tea and sugar, &c., they were forced to send to Inverness, fifty miles off. The superintendence of the farm, as well as the household, appears to have fallen to Mrs. Grant's care, and a complicated affair, as she observes, does highland farming appear to be. To very few rural occupations would the men in general condescend to attend; so that the cattle fell to the care of the women, who conducted them in summer from one glen or bothy to another, wandering about in a truly patriarchal style. "Yet, as they must carry their beds, food, and utensils, the housewife who furnishes and divides these matters, has enough to do, when her shepherd is in one glen, and her dairymaid in another with her milch cattle; not to mention some of the children,

who are marched off to the glen as a discipline, to inure them early to hardiness and simplicity of life. Meanwhile, his reverence, with my kitchen damsel and the ploughmen, constitute another family at home, from which all the rest are flying detachments, occasionally sent out and recalled, and regularly furnished with provision and forage."

Even the flax and the wool grown upon the farm were manufactured at home into clothing for the family; so that the employments of Mrs. Grant were nearly as multifarious as those of the virtuous women described by king Lemuel's mother, in the Proverbs.

In addition to these cares, she had those of a large and increasing family, twelve children being born whilst they dwelt at Laggan, of whom eight survived their father, and of these but one, strange to say, outlived his mother.

An elegant and beautiful girl, Charlotte Grant, a connexion of Mr. Grant's, was also for some years domiciled beneath their roof. She afterwards became Mrs. John Smith of Glasgow, and her untimely death, in 1800, was deeply felt by Mrs. Grant, who mourned in her the loss of a "daughter, sister, friend, counsellor, and what of all binds closest, fellow-sufferer and fellow-mourner."

Though their neighbourhood was scattered and distant, yet highland hospitality will always contrive to find society; and so much was it put into practice by Mr. and Mrs. Grant, that it was a matter of great surprise to their friends, how, with their large family and slender means, they could do so much in that way.

Mr. Macpherson, the translator of Ossian, had a house within visiting distance, and on his death, in 1796, Mrs. Grant observes, "I think we are somewhat

shrunk, and our consequence diminished, by losing the only person of eminence among us. 'Tis like extinguishing a light."

Some years after their marriage, Mrs. Grant's father removed to Fort George, where they paid him frequent visits, as well as to Mr. Grant's connexions dwelling in and about Banff and Elgin, and everywhere did this amiable pair receive the utmost kindness and attention. Indeed, Mrs. Grant, who had been told, on going to Laggan, that from being a lowlander by birth, she would not be acceptable to the inhabitants of that highland district, took a pride and a pleasure in conquering their prejudices, and by learning the language, and acquiring the customs of the people among whom she resided, she soon became popular among all classes; her kindness and attention to the wants of the poor, rendering her as great a favourite with them, as her worth and talents with those moving in a higher sphere.

In the year 1801, the death of Mr. Grant put a stop to this almost Arcadian state of felicity, and left Mrs. Grant, a widow, with eight children for whom to provide, and with debt and difficulties with which to contend. It was then that she was recommended by her friends to turn her poetical talents to account for the benefit of her family, she having been often in the habit of amusing a leisure hour with the composition of verses for the entertainment of her friends. The result was, that in a short time, more than three thousand subscribers were collected to a volume of poems, of which the longest was entitled "The Highlanders," which made its appearance in 1803, and some of which were described by the Edinburgh Review, as being "written with great beauty, tenderness, and delicacy."

The late celebrated Duchess of Gordon was one among the many influential personages who took a great interest in this publication, and by whom Mrs. Grant was, as it were, "forced before the public."

From the profits arising from her poems, Mrs. Grant was temporarily relieved from her pecuniary difficulties; but shortly afterwards the dangerous illness of her eldest daughter, Mary, who was threatened with consumption, and for the benefit of whose health she was, in 1802, obliged to go to the Bristol hot-wells, and also the outfit of one of her sons, who had obtained an appointment in the Bombay army, through the influence of her friend, Mr. Charles Grant, then chairman of the India House, involved her in such expenses, that the propriety of publishing her letters was suggested to her by her friends. It was thought that after suppressing all passages unsuited to the public eye, her artless and graphic descriptions of scenery and character would interest the public.

The well-known and beautiful "Letters from the Mountains" accordingly appeared in 1806. They went through several editions, and soon raised Mrs. Grant into high popularity, procuring for her the friendship and patronage of several influential personages, among whom were Bishop Porteus, Sir Walter Farquhar, Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls, and several of the Scotch literati.

These letters appearing before "the Scotch Fever," as it has been termed, had commenced, had the advantage of novelty to recommend them, and perhaps they may be considered as among the first, if not the very first, of the numerous publications which have subsequently attracted attention to Scotch scenery and manners.

In 1803, Mrs. Grant gave up her farm at Laggan, which she had been permitted to retain after the death of Mr. Grant, and removed to a sequestered but beautiful retreat near Stirling, sheltered by craggy rocks, and surrounded by pleasant woods, through which were many openings, walks, and sloping glades, full of singing birds, which found cover in the various shrubs which formed the underwood. The house stood upon a lawn, commanding an extensive and varied prospect over a level and fertile country, bounded in the distance by mountains lofty and wild, "whose fine contour was always noble, and at sunset beautiful."

Mrs. Grant's "Memoirs of an American Lady," which has been already mentioned, and which contains much vigorous and powerful writing, was another work of hers very deservedly popular. In was published in 1808, and was dedicated to Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls.

Mrs. Grant's "Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland," which appeared in 1811, were also most favourably received.

In the year 1810, Mrs. Grant removed from Stirling to Edinburgh, where she passed the remainder of her lengthened life, alike beloved and respected by all who knew her, but she had the misfortune to lose successively all her remaining children, excepting her youngest son, who alone survived her. The submission with which she bowed to the will of Providence under all these bereavements, excited the admiration of her sympathising friends.

In the year 1825, an application was made to King George the Fourth in favour of Mrs. Grant, to which were appended the names of Sir Walter Scott, Lord

Jeffery, Mr. Mackenzie, Sir Robert Liston, and Principal Baird, in consequence of which she received a pension of 100*l.* per annum on the civil establishment of Scotland, which, with the emoluments of her literary works, and some liberal bequests by deceased friends, rendered her latter years easy and independent.

To this application, the following account of her writings was appended by Sir Walter Scott :—"The character and talents of Mrs. Grant have long rendered her, not only a useful and estimable member of society, but one eminent for the services which she has rendered to the cause of religion, morality, knowledge, and taste. Her literary works, although composed amidst misfortune and privation, are written at once with simplicity and force; and uniformly bear the stamp of a virtuous and courageous mind, recommending to the reader that patience and fortitude, which the writer herself practised in such an eminent degree. Her writings, deservedly popular in her own country, derive their success from the manner in which, addressing themselves to the national pride of the Scottish people, they breathe a spirit at once of patriotism, and of that candour which renders patriotism unselfish and liberal. We have no hesitation in attesting our belief that Mrs. Grant's writings have produced a strong and salutary effect upon her countrymen, who not only found recorded in them much of national history and antiquities, which would otherwise have been forgotten, but found them combined with the soundest and best lessons of virtue and morality. We need scarcely add, that Mrs. Grant's character in private society has been equally high and exemplary; and it would be most painful to us to think that the declining age of this excellent person, remarkable alike

for her virtues and her talents, should, after such meritorious exertions to maintain her independence, and after so long a train of family misfortunes, have the bitterness of these privations aggravated by precarious and dependant circumstances."

Mrs. Grant's society was generally sought by celebrated persons visiting Edinburgh; among the rest she became acquainted with Mrs. Hemans, when there in 1829. The following is the account of another individual's introduction to her—Dr. Munro, the author of Peter's Letters, &c. who met her at an evening party:—"Mrs. Grant is really a woman of great talents and acquirements, and might, without offence to any one, talk upon any subject she pleases. But I assure you, any person who hopes to meet with a *blue stocking*, in the ordinary sense of the term, in this lady, will feel sadly disappointed. She is plain, modest, and unassuming, as she could have been had she never stepped from the village whose name she has rendered so celebrated. Instead of entering on any long common-place discussions, either about politics, or political economy, or any other of the hackneyed subjects of tea-table talk in Edinburgh, Mrs. Grant had the good sense to perceive that a stranger, such as I was, came not to hear disquisitions, but to gather useful information, and she therefore directed her conversation entirely to the subject which she herself best understands—which, in all probability, she understands better than any one else—and which was precisely one of those subjects in which I felt the greatest inclination to hear a sensible person speak;—namely, the Highlands. She related, in a very simple but very graphic manner, a variety of little anecdotes and traits of character, with my recollections of which I

shall always have a pleasure in connecting my recollections of herself. The sound and rational enjoyment I derived from my conversation with this excellent person, would, indeed, atone for much more than all the *blue stocking* sisterhood have ever been able to inflict upon my patience."

Soon after this was written, and now nearly twenty years ago, Mrs. Grant had the misfortune to meet with a severe fall in descending a staircase, in consequence of which, she was ever after confined almost entirely to the house. It was feared this imprisonment might prove very injurious to a person of her robust constitution and active habits. But though generally confined to her chair, she continued to enjoy excellent health, with her usual cheerfulness and equanimity.

A few weeks before her death, this excellent woman caught a severe cold, which assuming the form of influenza, her constitution gradually yielded to its debilitating effects, and on the seventh of November, 1838, she expired in the eighty-fourth year of her age.

Pleasing as are her published works, it is said that Mrs. Grant's conversational powers were even still more attractive, her information on every subject combining with her uniform cheerfulness and equanimity, to make her society very delightful. There was a dignity and sedateness, united with considerable sprightliness and vivacity, in her conversation, which rendered it highly interesting, and withal, it was so unaffected and natural, and seemed to emanate from her well-stored mind with so little effort, that some of her most profound and judicious remarks, as well as her liveliest sallies, appeared as if they had been struck off at the moment, without any previous reflection. The native

simplicity of her mind, and an entire freedom from attempts at display, soon made the youngest person, with whom she conversed, feel as in the presence of a friend.

If there were any quality of Mrs. Grant's well-balanced mind which stood out more prominently than another, it was that benevolence which made her invariably study the comfort of every person who came in contact with her. Indeed, her talents may be said to have been her least recommendation, for she was a sincere Christian, an excellent wife and mother, a warm friend, and exemplary in all the duties of life.

WORKS.

The Highlanders and other Poems, 1803.
Letters from the Mountains, 1806.
Memoirs of an American Lady, 1808.
Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland, 1811.

MRS. ELIZABETH HAMILTON.

Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton was descended from the Hamiltons of Woodhall, one of the first of that family established in Scotland, and the stock from whence have sprung all the branches, since ennobled, bearing that name, whether in these kingdoms, France, or Germany.

In the reigns of the Charleses, the Hamiltons were zealous for the covenant, and the great grandfather of Mrs. E. Hamilton, not being able to endure the establishment of the Liturgy, left Scotland in discontent, and, with his family and a few chosen friends, repaired to Ireland, where, in a remote part of Ulster, he trusted to enjoy liberty of conscience. Though a younger son, he had sufficient property to enable him to purchase land in Monaghan, which he left among the persons who accompanied him thither.

The grandfather of the subject of this memoir, having entered the army at the early age of fifteen, and having gone over to Scotland to join a regiment of cavalry, succeeded to no part of this property. At the university

of Edinburgh, which he entered about the same time to complete his education, he acquired a distaste for a military life, and soon after gladly relinquished it for a civil appointment; he subsequently married a lady of distinguished beauty, possessed of what, though a small sum in itself, was at that day in Scotland deemed a considerable fortune.

Unfortunately, however, Mrs. Hamilton deemed it incumbent upon her to live in a style rather suited to the name she bore, than to the limited state of her finances; and being, as her granddaughter observes, "too fine a lady to be a good manager," she continued to vie with the people of rank with whom she associated, without, like many of her countrywomen, "making up by secret privation for ostentatious display."

In vain did her husband remonstrate, and in vain did they move from one place of residence to another, in order to find a society among whom they could live on equal terms with their neighbours, without exceeding their income. The day of reckoning at last came, and his wife's fortune having been gradually dissipated in paying the debts contracted by her too profuse manner of living, Mr. Hamilton at last found himself unable to meet the demands of government; and so deeply did this prey upon his mind, that a friend, to whom he had one morning unburdened his mind, and who, on the following morning, repaired to his apartment in order to offer consolation, on drawing the curtains of the bed, found him a corpse. At his death, he bequeathed to his children no better inheritance than pride of family and poverty of purse.

They appear to have felt very deeply their change of circumstances, and its untoward accompaniments.

The eldest daughter went to live with a rich aunt in Ireland, who was surrounded with numerous relatives, competitors and rivals with her for the old lady's fortune.

The fate of the youngest was still more to be pitied, for at sixteen she had formed an engagement with the eldest son of a baronet, and her marriage would have taken place in a few months, but for the untimely death of her father. This event, and the change which it produced in their circumstances, produced an equal alteration in the mind of the gentleman's father, at whose desire the poor girl was abandoned for a wealthier bride. She eventually married Mr. Marshall.

The father of Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton settled in Dublin, and married a lady named Mackay. This marriage was productive of the greatest happiness, which was only interrupted by the untimely death of Mr. Hamilton, of a typhus fever, in 1759. He left two daughters and a son, dependent upon the kindness of their relatives, to struggle through the world as they best might.

The widow, with her two elder children, appears to have continued at Belfast till 1767, when she died. An elder brother of hers, Mr. Mackay, many years minister of the Independent meeting there, resided with her, and took the eldest girl, Katharine, for his own peculiar charge. This kindness, in after years, was repaid, in his old age, by the filial attentions he received from his niece.

The son, Charles, after having completed his education, spent two years in Dublin, but so great was his repugnance to mercantile pursuits, that he subsequently abandoned them for the military profession.

Elizabeth, the youngest daughter, who was born on the 25th of July, 1758, at Belfast, in Ireland, was, when about six years old, surrendered to the care of her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Marshall, who were then residing in a solitary mansion near Stirling; and here, for two happy years, with a playmate of the other sex, she was allowed to run wild among the beauties of nature, an ardent love for which she retained to her last moments; and to the feats of hardihood and enterprise to which in her childhood she was stimulated in imitation of her companion, may be attributed that activity and elasticity of spirits which in her old age would induce her, " even when lame, to descend declivities which might have daunted ladies in the full possession of health and vigour."

At eight years old, her education, which heretofore had been confined to merely learning to read, was more regularly attended to, and she was sent to board with a female friend at Stirling, from whose house she attended the best seminary that town afforded. This school, according to the fashion of the country and of the day, was presided over by a master. Three hours daily were devoted to Mr. Manson, from whom she learnt writing, geography, and the use of the globes, and in the ensuing year she began French, to which were subsequently added drawing and music. She also attended a dancing-school, and soon became passionately fond of that exercise.

On Saturday, she regularly returned to her aunt's house, and the arrival of her old horse Lochabar, her usual conveyance, was ever anticipated with great delight by the youthful scholar. That evening was always a sort of festival both to herself and her kind

24392

friends; but the Sunday, according to the Scotch custom, was spent in attending kirk or chapel, learning long tasks, and with a degree of puritanic precision, not entirely to the taste of the lively schoolgirl. She alludes to this in one of her subsequent publications, when she states, "that her recollection did not furnish her with a single instance of improvement from any of the didactic compositions she was obliged to get by heart. Often did her dear and amiable instructress listen with mingled delight and solicitude to her senseless, though accurate, recitation of passages which excited in her mind a train of ideas very different from those raised in her niece's."

And yet, notwithstanding these little drawbacks, Mrs. E. Hamilton, in allusion to her early years, says, "No child ever spent so happy a life; nor indeed have I ever met with anything at all resembling the way in which we lived, except the description given by Rousseau of Wolmer's farm and vintage." Her aunt had, during her father and mother's lifetime, received an excellent education; the latter attending to the more elegant accomplishments, whilst the former endeavoured to make his children rational and useful members of society.

Mrs. Marshall, from her niece's account, must have been a very superior woman, though disgust at the unkindness with which she had at one time been treated by some of her connexions, had induced her to withdraw almost entirely from her own relations. To this, perhaps, some remains of the Hamilton family pride might contribute, and the being unwilling to be seen by them in a sphere different from that to which she had been accustomed.

Mr. Marshall was an Episcopalian; Mrs. Marshall

conformed to the kirk; but the bigotry of sectarianism was unknown to both, and to their example as well as precept, may perhaps be attributed the liberality of Miss Hamilton's religious views.

In her thirteenth year, Elizabeth returned to her uncle's house, where a young person had been engaged to assist her in music and drawing. In the former accomplishment she probably did not make great progress, as in a letter to Miss Joanna Baillie, in 1809, she says, "Had the many precious hours devoted to hammering at the pianoforte, to which I certainly had no calling, been given up to pursuits more agreeable to my own taste, I should now be reaping the advantage."

About this time, some one intimate in the family took some pains, by ridicule, to undermine her religious principles, which, backed by the distasteful severity of the kirk service, might have produced a baneful effect, had not she determined to solve the state of doubt she was in, by privately studying the Scriptures; and the result was, the thorough conviction of their truth, for she observed, "the moral precepts were too pure to have been promulgated by an impostor."

In 1772, her brother, Mr. Hamilton, having obtained a cadetship in the East India Company's service, sailed from England for that country. Previous to his departure, he had paid his friends in Scotland a visit, and being five years the senior of his sister Elizabeth, it was productive of the greatest advantage to her, as her brother was a superior young man, and the most enthusiastic attachment was felt for him by his relations. The correspondence with him appears to have afforded her one of the principal pleasures of her retired situation.

About the same time, Mr. Marshall removed to Ingram's Crook, a romantic spot in the vicinity of the stream of Bannockburn, where was fought the famous battle that bears that name. It received this name from Sir John Ingram, an English knight, perishing on that memorable day. The stream formed a sort of peninsula, near which Mr. Marshall's habitation was built; a thatched cottage, covered with woodbines and roses, inclosed within a court, and embowered in the shade of orchards and other plantations.

It was here that Mrs. E. Hamilton spent nearly the whole of the following twenty years of her life—a quiet and almost monotonous existence, only varied by a little trip to the Highlands, a memorable event in her career, as being the first occasion of her appearing in print, for the journal she kept for her aunt's amusement having been shown to one of the party, was by him sent to a provincial magazine, where, to the surprise of the youthful writer, it made its appearance.

A sudden excursion to Ireland, in 1778, was another event in her life, and here she spent some months in the society of her sister, Mrs. Blake, of Oran Castle.

In 1870, when about twenty-two years of age, the death of Mrs. Marshall took place, which was a great affliction to her niece, for in her Miss Hamilton not only lost the kind friend and protectress of her youth, but in this retirement she was almost the only companionable person with whom she was acquainted.

Miss Hamilton continued to reside with her uncle, but from her letters it is evident how much she felt this almost total privation of society; and the very few opportunities she had of entering into any, particularly of a superior order, were enjoyed with the greatest

delight. Speaking of the conversation of the good and wise, she says, "The enjoyment of such society has been the happiness to which I have, from my early years, looked up as the first and greatest that this world affords. When I indulged in the dreams of imagination, fancy never drew a picture of felicity in which an introduction to this society was not the first object."

In her correspondence with her brother, Miss Hamilton thus describes her quiet and secluded life in 1780. She is speaking of Mr. Marshall, her only companion since the death of her aunt.

"He treats me with the affection of a father and all the confidence of a friend. He leaves everything to my management within doors, and expresses approbation of everything I do. Indeed, I never take a step without his advice. I exert my utmost power to make him easy and happy. I believe there are few houses where the genius of Concord and Peace reigns more uninterruptedly than in our little mansion."

1781. "Here, tranquillity holds an uninterrupted reign. From the time I get up in the morning, till my uncle makes his appearance at dinner-time, I have no more use for the faculty of speech than the monks of La Trappe: then, indeed, I get a little conversation on the style of the country, of the badness of the weather, the deepness of the roads, the qualities of manure, or *politics*, which we discuss to admiration.

"After settling these important matters, my revered companion takes a nap and I settle at the harpsichord, till our reading time begins, (which is usually from seven till eleven,) and then I hold forth on various subjects. History and travels are our chief favourites; but with them we intermix a variety of miscellaneous

literature, with now and then a favourite novel, to relish our graver studies. This is a picture of the last three months, and may serve as one for many more to come."

" 1782. " This is one of the most solitary winters I have ever passed, as I have now no companions to enliven any part of it. I should not like to leave my worthy uncle to pass these long winter evenings alone, and on that account I cheerfully give up the pleasure I might expect from a more enlarged society. Indeed, I very seldom think of going farther than the gravel-walk. Happily, nature has furnished me with a good flow of spirits, and an imagination that can find amusement within itself. Were this not the case, I should be apt to feel the effects of continued dulness; and still, in some cross moments, I can't help thinking it a little hard, that with all the good-will imaginable towards the pleasure of society, I should be condemned to pass the best days of my youth in such a solitude, that I might, to all intents and purposes, be as well shut up in a monastery; for though I am not forbid the use of my tongue, unless I were to utter my complaints to the groves and purling streams, I must be silent."

Mr. Marshall by no means wished to debar his niece from the pleasures of society, but, as after his morning walk round the farm, he fondly looked for the young companion who presided at his table, and whose absence could not be supplied by any friend or neighbour, Miss Hamilton, in consequence, made the resolution not to accept any invitation in which he was not included, and for the first six years after her aunt's death she seldom left Ingram's Crook unaccompanied by her uncle. This voluntary surrender of her own inclinations for the sake of one who had treated her with so much kindness in her

childhood, places her in a very amiable point of view; the more so, as she appears during her whole life to have been particularly partial to society.

In after years she thus expresses herself in a private journal. 1823. "It is only at special times, that, by a rare occurrence of circumstance, persons are brought together whose minds by collision emit sparks that at once warm the heart and enlighten the understanding. This singular happiness I have at different periods of my life enjoyed, and brief as was the enjoyment, I consider it as the first of terrestrial blessings." Elsewhere, she says, in a letter, "Of all the privileges enjoyed by the lords of the creation, there is none so estimable as having it in their power to form a society of their own liking. Any young man in the station of a gentleman may, with agreeable manners, make his acquaintance with characters of a superior stamp: he may gradually introduce himself to the notice, at least to the company, of those from whose conversation he can reap instruction, and is under no necessity of being confined to the society of uncongenial minds; whereas poor women cannot escape out of the rubbish in which they may happen to be buried, but at the expense of many *rubs* and *scratches*."

"To persons who have the power of selection, a capital affords opportunities of mental improvement that are of incalculable advantage; for with regard to the effects of society upon the mind, your observation is too just. Like the evil spirits in Pandemonium, we shrink into the dimensions of the place we are appointed to occupy, or that we seem in the opinion of others to occupy,—never expanding to improper stature, but as we are excited by sympathy with our compeers. If the

mind be thus cramped in early life, (as is generally the fate of my sex,) it is a thousand to one that it remains stationary for ever, never making an attempt to rise above the level of its immediate associates; and even where it has been enabled to expand, it is so much easier to sink to the level of others, than to raise the minds of others to a level with our own, that few in such circumstances do not sink. It is only by the love of reading that the evil resulting from the association with *little* minds can be counteracted. A lively imagination creates a sympathy with favourite authors, which gives to their sentiments the same power over the mind as that possessed by an intimate and ever present friend; and hence a taste for reading becomes to females of still greater importance than it is of to men."

In 1785, Miss Hamilton's first voluntary contribution to the press appeared in the 46th number of the "Lounger," where it is prefaced by some very complimentary observations of Mr. Mackenzie, though at the time it was without any knowledge of the author. This seems to have been a solitary performance, for at this period, as her memorialist observes, it is not probable that she aspired to literary fame. "A fairer vision floated on her fancy; a happiness dearer than distinction appeared to invite her acceptance; but the vision passed away without casting an invidious shade on her existence."

She subsequently, however, frequently hints at some disappointment in life; she speaks of "a time when her heart was suffering a degree of anguish, greater perhaps than any event of life ought to have inflicted on a reasonable being."

But she probably soon subdued these painful feel-

ings, from the following sportive verses, which were written about this time, in which she supposes herself presented with a mirror giving her power to contemplate her friends after the lapse of thirty years. Of herself, she says,

"With expectation beating high
Myself I now desire to spy;
And strait I in a glass surveyed
An antique lady, much decayed,
Whose languid eye and pallid cheek
The conquering power of time bespeak.
But though deprived of youthful bloom,
Free was my face from peevish gloom.
A cap, tho' not of modern grace,
Hid my grey hairs, and decked my face;
No more I fashion's livery wear,
But cleanly neatness all my care;
Whoe'er had seen me must have said,
There goes one cheerful, pleased old maid."

Tranquillity, however, soon regained its empire over her mind, for in March, 1786, she tells her brother, "Since my return from Glasgow I have been almost always at home, with no companion but my good old man, who is seldom within doors till dinner-time; after which he regales himself with his long-accustomed nap, and then, between reading, chatting, and backgammon, we conclude the evening; we usually retire, making the remark, that if we are not regaled by any high-seasoned amusements, we are disturbed by no uneasy cares: our peace is unmolested by anxiety, and our content unbroken by remorse." * * * "In a scene that seldom knows a variation, except what the change of season produces in the prospects around me, whereby much the largest portion of my time is spent in com-

plete solitude, the pleasures of imagination are the chief source of delight."

Of the benefits to be derived from the exercise of this faculty of the mind, she ever retained an exalted idea, and the following admirable observations of her's, written in 1801, when at the mature age of forty-three; are transcribed, to show to the present utilitarian age what the opinion a person, endowed with such sound judgment and strong powers of mind, entertained of that power to which we are all indebted so largely, but which is yet too often represented, by the learned and scientific, the serious and the good, as a sort of scapegrace, to whom all manner of mischief is to be imputed.

"I perfectly agree with you in considering castles in the air as more useful edifices than they are generally allowed to be. It is only plodding matter-of-fact dulness that cannot comprehend their use. I do not scruple to confess to you, as I find you are a sister adept in this art of freemasonry, that I owe to it three-fourths of my sense, and half of my virtue. It is by giving scope to the imagination, that one becomes thoroughly acquainted with the real dispositions of one's own heart; it is by comparing the ardent efforts of exalted virtue, formed by the fancy, with what conscience tells us we have performed, that we are instigated to improvement, and by tracing the combinations of which our castles have been composed, we acquire such a knowledge of our own minds, as at once enlightens the understanding, and betters the heart. I seriously believe that the great disadvantage of perpetually living in a crowd, is the check it puts upon the free excursions of imagination.

"Was ever Bath belle as much improved by walking in the crowded crescent, as you and I have been by

a solitary ramble, when, at the magic touch of fancy, a new creation has arisen around us? By most of the pious people and pious writers I have met with, the imagination is treated as a sort of evil spirit, that must be exorcised and laid at rest; but, in my opinion, it is very impious, and surely very ungrateful, thus to treat the first of blessings, without which judgment will be but a sour old maid, producing nothing. Let us marry them, and we shall do better, for it is evident neither of them was meant for the single state."

That her imagination was, however, kept within proper bounds, is evident from the following observations upon this period of her life: "In the loss of my dear maternal friend, my mind experienced not only the shock of grief, and pain of sorrow, but was brought to exercise its powers in thoughtful meditation; it was then I first learnt to check the quick sallies of passion, and to restrain this sanguine flight of delusive hope; it was then I first felt the uncertainty of earthly happiness, and first experienced the comforts of a religious education, which led me, when deprived of the guide and directress of my youth, to consider myself as being still under the protection of my Almighty Friend and Benefactor, whose blessing I implored, and for whose favour I sought more seriously than I ever should have done in the giddy days of unclouded prosperity. By time, however, the strongest impressions will be in some degree effaced. Again, perhaps, might my mind have wandered in the flowery field of earthly bliss, had it not been called again to reflection by the sharp sting of disappointment, the effects of which, upon my mind, bore no proportion to the cause, and which, in the retrospect, must make me still conscious of my own weakness, and for ever

diffident of my own judgment; and which ought likewise to render me indulgent to the weakness, and compassionate to the sorrows of others, even when they appear most imaginary."

But the solitude in which she lived, which it is evident Miss Hamilton felt deeply, although she bore it with fortitude, was at last cheered by the somewhat sudden and unexpected return to England of her beloved brother, who, on the 20th December, 1786, arrived at Ingram's Crook, to the unspeakable joy of his sister. Amidst the toils of his military profession, he had found time to study the Oriental languages, and had already commenced the account of the Rohilla war, in the expedition against which nation he had been personally engaged. In this he was arrested by the illness of Mr. Anderson, who had been selected by Warren Hastings to translate from the Persian the Hedaya, or code of Mussulman laws, and this more important undertaking was, in consequence, then consigned to the care of Mr. Hamilton, who obtained permission to return for five years to England, for the better performance of his engagement.

From Ingram's Crook he proceeded to Dublin, to see his eldest sister, Mrs. Blake, who accompanied him to London, and after the publication of the History of the Rohilla War had been effected, they, together, returned to Mr. Marshall's cottage, where, for the first time since their mother's death in 1767, the brother and two sisters were re-united under one roof.

Mr. Hamilton remained for some months at Ingram's Crook, engaged in his Persian researches, in which he was occasionally assisted by his sister Elizabeth; and the pleasure and advantages she derived from this intimate

association with so superior and well-informed a person, proved of incalculable advantage to her. She delighted to ascribe to him the developement of her mind, and this auspicious season was ever represented by her as the era of a new existence. Enthusiastically attached to him, she insensibly assimilated herself with his pursuits, and from him caught the idioms and became familiar with the customs and manners of the East.

In 1788, Mr. Hamilton left Scotland, accompanied by his youngest sister, who was willingly allowed by her uncle to visit the metropolis under the care of her brother. This was the first time she had ever been in London, and perhaps in England, and, as Mr. Hamilton was attached to the cause of Warren Hastings, whose trial then agitated the political world, and who had been the original proposer and patron of his translation of Hedaya, he was in consequence intimate with his supporters, many of whom were persons of talent; consequently Miss Hamilton was immediately introduced into a refined and polished society, the beau ideal of her youthful dreams. With reference to this period, she subsequently observes in her journal, "Happy were the days of my youth, spent in the bosom of peace and innocence. Yet in the midst of that happiness, how many vague wishes would arise! I longed for communication with that world which imagination painted so fair and so desirable. Vanity assured me that I should then be gratified by receiving that homage which I believed to be invariably given to superior talents and virtue. The love and esteem of my friends and companions did not satisfy my soul. I wished to know, and to be known, as fully by those whose esteem would confer a higher houour, and be more gratifying to my ambition. Thus

these days of most perfect happiness were consumed in forming visions of the future, even when my mind had no particular object of pursuit."

In the summer she returned to her uncle, but in the following autumn Mr. Marshall, who had hitherto enjoyed uninterrupted health, was carried off by an epidemic complaint, at the advanced age of eighty. A monument was erected to him by his niece, who ever retained a most grateful attachment to his memory.

After this melancholy event, Miss Hamilton rejoined her brother and sister, with whom she spent the following two years in London and its neighbourhood. During this period she made some very desirable and advantageous friendships; but with the completion of the printing of the translation of the Hedaya, and upon his appointment as Resident at the vizier's court, Mr. Hamilton found it again necessary to prepare to leave England. The little establishment was accordingly broken up.

Mrs. Blake went to the north of England, and Miss Hamilton returned to Ingram's Crook, where she received a parting visit from her beloved brother in September, 1793, who now urged on her what he had often recommended to her attention—the engaging in some literary pursuit, to afford amusement in her solitude, and to beguile her grief for their separation.

Mr. Hamilton's health had long ceased to be robust, and in this last northern journey he contracted a cold, which soon assumed such alarming symptoms, that a voyage to Lisbon was recommended; but though, on the first knowledge of his indisposition, both his sisters hastened to him, yet it was too late for even their attentions to prove efficacious, and he died on the 14th March, 1792, at the age of thirty-nine.

Miss Hamilton paid the following elegant tribute to his memory: "One gentleman it has been my happiness to know, who entered on life at the age of sixteen, without guide but his own principles, without monitor but the precepts of education, and the dictates of his own heart. Unsullied by the temptations of a capital, he was plunged into those of a camp; fond of society, where his cheerful temper formed him to shine, but still fonder of improvement, neither the inducement of camp nor city interrupted the unwearied pursuits of literature and science. Surrounded by companions who had caught the contagion of scepticism, he, at this early period, listened to their arguments, weighed, examined, detected their futility, and rejected them. In prosperity and adversity, in public and private life, the sentiments of religion retained their influence on his heart; through life they were his friends, in death his consolation."

Mr. Hamilton's death was a terrible blow to the sisters, who were tenderly attached to their brother, particularly Miss Hamilton, who entertained for him the most enthusiastic affection, and who looked up to him with admiration and reverence, as to a superior being. Upon this bereavement, they retired to Hadleigh, in Suffolk, where they resided in quiet and seclusion till the death of a friend there induced them to remove to Sunning, in Berkshire; and it was about 1796, that Miss Hamilton's first performance to which her name was regularly affixed, made its appearance in the literary world. This was entitled "The Letters of a Hindoo Rajah;" which probably partly owed its origin to the oriental literature to which her attention had been turned whilst residing with her brother.

In the character of Charlotte Percy, Miss Hamilton's

own feelings are embodied, and in Percy is delineated that of her departed brother. Though an air of melancholy pervades this work, yet the observations of the Hindoo upon the state of society evince a keen sense of the ludicrous.

The success of the work was such, that she was soon induced to attempt another, and during the absence of her sister, she lived in perfect seclusion with a family in Gloucestershire, when she proceeded rapidly with "The Modern Philosophers," till interrupted by an attack of illness, which eventually proved to be gout, to which she was ever afterwards subject.

On being rejoined by Mrs. Blake, they agreed to settle in Bath, the waters of which had proved of service to her; and here her literary undertaking was resumed, which was published in 1800, when it met with such success that it passed through two editions within the year. At first it made its appearance anonymously, and was assigned to two or three celebrated writers. Miss Hamilton was soon afterwards induced to avow her authorship.

Such was the popularity of this work, that she at once became distinguished and celebrated in the literary world, and an object of curiosity and interest to the public. Although, with the absurdities as well as crimes of the first French Revolution, the interest of the work is almost gone by, still there is much to amuse and instruct, and the sentimental and romantic damsel may take a hint from the follies of Bridgetina, and profit from the melancholy fate of the unfortunate Julia.

In the same year, Miss Hamilton commenced her "Letters on Education," the first volume of which appeared in the following year, 1801, and had the effect

of greatly increasing her celebrity as a writer, and procuring for her an eulogium from Dugald Stewart.

The fame of Miss Hamilton was now such, that her society was courted by the most distinguished visitors and residents at Bath, and on this occasion she observes, "I am sensible of the advantage attending an opportunity of making observations upon people in every sphere. I like to trace the influence of situation in forming the mind, and to observe the rise of those opinions and prejudices which form the character." But how far she was from the "exclusive" folly of the present day is apparent from her following remarks.

"The whole tenor of my observation upon human character convince me, that however quick the perception, however cultivated the understanding, and however refined the taste, there never will be much expansion in the minds of those who have been confined by situation to one particular sphere. People in high life have this peculiar disadvantage attending them, that all who mix with them aim at conforming to their manners and prejudices, so that their vanity is fed from all quarters. Is it then extraordinary that strength of mind and vigour of intellect should be so seldom met with in elevated situations? Were people in the middling ranks of society but fully sensible of the advantages they enjoy, from the opportunities of enlarging their sphere of observation on all sides, so many would surely not be found willing to relinquish this privilege, for the silly gratification of being considered of *a certain class*. This folly, of which I see so many instances, provokes while it diverts me. As real knowledge and sound reasoning gain ground, this folly will disappear."

In 1802, Miss Hamilton and her sister Mrs. Blake,

spent some time in visiting Wales, the Lakes, Scotland, &c. They passed a few days with the celebrated recluses of Llangollen, Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby. Miss Hamilton says, "The cottage is the quintessence of taste, elegance, and comfort; and these ladies have created a little paradise around them. Twenty-four years have now elapsed since the plan was formed, and every day has increased their satisfaction in its accomplishment."

From Llangollen they proceeded to Liverpool, and that she was duly appreciated there, is apparent from Dr. Currie's remark to her friend Hector M'Neill: "That Miss Hamilton is a clear-headed creature; when we are all arguing and disputing on what we cannot determine, she comes in with one of her short remarks, and sets us right in an instant, by hitting *the nail exactly on the head.*"

From Liverpool they continued their route to the Lakes, where they soon fixed themselves in private apartments at an inn in Bowness, a village on the Lake of Windermere, and in this secluded spot she began to prepare her materials for the "Memoirs of Agrippina," which, originally, was intended to illustrate the speculative principles in her "Letters on Education." This may be considered rather a biographical work than a novel, as it is often called, for it contains a faithful representation of the history and manners of the period, and she was indefatigable in her researches.

At Bowness, Miss Hamilton became acquainted with Bishop Watson and his family, then resident at Calgarth on Windermere; also with Miss Elizabeth Smith, who was then with her family at Coniston, eight miles from Bowness, a distance she often walked before breakfast.

From Bowness the sisters proceeded to Edinburgh, where Miss Hamilton first became acquainted with Miss Edgworth, with whom she was, from the very first, charmed and delighted. She was ever disposed to love and admire merit and talent, in her own sex, and she would say, that "women of talents, by their reciprocation of tenderness and friendship, verified the fable of the nine Muses."

It was in this northern metropolis, that in the autumn of 1804, the two sisters finally took up their residence, and about this time Miss Hamilton was informed of the pension that had been conferred on her by King George III., in consideration that her talents had ever been exerted in the cause of religion and virtue. She was also so earnestly requested by a nobleman who had lost his wife, to undertake the care of his children, that she was at length induced to acquiesce in part, and for a limited time she resided in the family as a friend, to superintend the future arrangements. At the end of six months she resigned the charge, but still retained so much interest in her adopted children, that she composed, during a comparatively solitary winter spent at Westham, the "Letters to the Daughter of a Nobleman," which were published in the spring of 1806, and were favourably received by the public.

Miss Hamilton soon after became an active assistant in the promotion of the House of Industry, at Edinburgh, a most useful establishment for the education of females of the lowest class; and for the benefit of the young persons there, she composed a little work entitled "Exercises in Religious Knowledge," which was published in 1809, receiving the sanction of Bishop Sandford and Mr. Alison.

"The Cottagers of Glenburnie" was commenced, at first, merely for the amusement of a passing hour; but those to whom the first sheets were communicated, were so much interested and entertained, that she was induced to continue it; and when published, both in Scotland and England, its success was so great, that a cheap edition was forthwith printed, and the work circulated extensively among the highlands. It evinces the powers of her mind, that she should thus be equally competent to form the minds and manners of the daughters of a nobleman, and to reform the simple but idle habits of the peasantry. At Ingram's Crook she probably had had many opportunities of observing the dirty and indolent, the "canna be fashed" style of living among the humble classes, and in London and Bath she had mingled with the great and the fashionable.

Although her health was now gradually failing, yet Mrs. Hamilton, as she was now styled, when equal to the exertion, regularly devoted her mornings to study, and at two o'clock she descended to the drawing-room, where she generally found some friend ready to receive her. On Mondays she deviated from this rule, and admitted visitors all the morning, and as it was considered a distinction to be acquainted with her, her levee was attended by all the principal literary characters of Edinburgh, and it was generally protracted till a late hour. Of an evening, when no other engagement intervened, the interval from seven till ten was occupied with some interesting work, read aloud for the benefit of the whole party, according to the constant custom of Ingram's Crook. She says, in a letter to a friend, "I wish you could, like me, find pleasure in rug-making. It is far better for the health than book-making; and, I assure you, I

find the choice of worsteds a far more amusing study than the choice of words."

Surrounded by all "that should accompany old age, as honour, love, obedience, troops of friends," it is no wonder that she should meet its approach with fortitude and cheerfulness; and the following sportive lines evince her feelings on its advances.

"Is that old age that's toiling at the pin?
I trow it is,—then haste to let him in;
Ye're kindly welcome, friend; na, dinna fear,
To show yourself, ye'll cause no trouble here.
I ken there are who tremble at your name,
As though you brought with you reproach and shame,
And who 'a thousand lies would bear the sin,'
Rather than own ye for their kith and kin.
But far frae shirking ye as a disgrace,
Thankfu' I am t' have lived to see your face,
Nor shall I ere disown ye, nor take pride
To think how long I might your visit bide.
Doing my best to make ye well respected,
I'll no fear for your sake to be neglected," &c. &

She then goes on to bargain with him, as to what he may, and what he may not, take from her, and at length tells him, she welcomes him as her guide "to the blest arms of everlasting youth," and concludes—

. . . "And now all's told,
Let us set out upon our journey cold.
With no vain boasts, nor vain regrets tormented,
We'll e'en jog on the gate, quiet and contented."

In 1812, the state of her health was such that she was recommended to pass the winter in England; and with her sister and a young female relation, she repaired to Kenilworth, from whence she transmitted the last pages of a long-expected work which appeared in the

April of the following year, under the title of "Popular Essays on the Elementary Principles of the Human Mind," a sort of supplementary work to the "Letters on Education." These were rather of a religious than of a philosophical nature, and from her journal, it is evident she endeavoured to regulate her own conduct by the high standard of rectitude she recommends for general imitation.

This journal was a series of private papers written chiefly upon a Sunday, to assist herself in the exercise of self-examination, and which she continued for the space of twenty-seven years,—from 1788 to 1815.

From Kenilworth they went to Clifton, and from thence to Ireland, the land of her nativity, though not of her parentage and education, where Mrs. Hamilton met with every mark of respect and attention. Among other visits, they paid one to Bellevue, the beautiful and magnificent seat of Mr. Peter Latouche, at Delgony, in Wicklow. But, though prepared to admire the grandeur of their style of living, and the beauty of the scenery around, Mrs. Hamilton states these to be nothing to "the heaven-directed efforts of Mrs. Latouche in the moral improvement of all that part of the community that falls within the reach of her influence."

Delgony has not unaptly been termed "the show place of Ireland," which title it well deserves, from the moral and natural beauty everywhere to be seen. Nature has there done much, but benevolence far more in this delightful village, where it is apparent that the family of a beneficent resident gentleman can work wonders in the amelioration of the situation of the peasantry of Ireland.

Mrs. Hamilton returned to Edinburgh in the winter, and in 1815 she published her last work, a small volume, called "Hints addressed to the Patrons and Directors of Public Schools," recommending Pestalozzi's plan to their consideration.

In the following year, just previous to their quitting Edinburgh, with the idea of taking up their residence in England, she was attacked with indisposition, and although, in company with her sister, she reached Harrowgate, she soon perceived that her illness was of a mortal nature. She gradually declined till the 23rd of July, 1816, when she expired, having nearly completed her fifty-eighth year. She was buried at the church of Harrowgate, where a simple monument has been erected to her memory by her sister, the last of the affectionate trio, who, for so many years, were all in all to each other.

The singularly uneventful career of Mrs. Hamilton presents but little for the pen of a biographer to commemorate, yet it is both useful and interesting to observe how she educed good from every situation in life. She was beloved and admired wherever she was known, and among her numerous literary friends and acquaintances may be enumerated Miss Edgeworth, Elizabeth Smith, Joanna Baillie, Dr. Currie, Dugald Stewart, Alison, and Hector M'Neill, the bard of Stirling, who knew and appreciated her from her earliest youth, and with whose description of her this memoir shall be concluded.

"In all my intercourse with the world, I never knew any one with a finer mind, a warmer heart, a clearer head, or a sounder understanding; and, perhaps, were we to particularise the most permanent feature in Mrs. Hamilton's intellectual character, we might select the

two last-mentioned as the most remarkable. Such was the clearness of her conceptions, and such the quickness of her discrimination, that she seldom or never hesitated a moment to give her opinion decidedly on any subject introduced,—and, what is equally remarkable, seldom or never were her opinions erroneous. Such is the result of my observations on one I knew above forty years, during which she continued to rise in my estimation. In her death, I have sustained a loss which I have reason to think I can never retrieve; but while my heart bleeds at the thought, it ceases not to glow at the remembrance of her virtue."

WORKS.

Forty-sixth Number of Lounger, 1785.
Letters of a Hindoo Rajah, 1796.
The Modern Philosopher, 1800.
Letters on Education, 1801.
Memoirs of Agrippine, 1803.
Letters to the Daughter of a Nobleman, 1806.
Exercises on Religious Knowledge.
Cottagers of Glenbervie.
Popular Essays on the Elementary Principles of the Human Mind, 1812.
Hints addressed to the Patrons and Directors of Public Schools, 1815.

MRS. MARY WOLLSTONECROFT GODWIN.

MARY WOLLSTONECROFT, afterwards Mrs. Godwin, was born on the 27th of April, 1759, either in London, or at a farm on Epping Forest, where her parents often resided, and where, at all events, the first five years of her life were principally passed.

She was the eldest daughter and second child of Edward John Wollstonecroft, by his wife, Elizabeth Dixon, of Ballyshannon, in Ireland. Her paternal grandfather was a respectable manufacturer in Spitalfields, who was supposed to have left his son a property of about ten thousand pounds. But Mr. Wollstonecroft, who was of an active and very versatile disposition, and who appears not to have been regularly bred to any profession, was constantly changing his pursuits, sometimes amusing himself with farming, at others engaging in commercial speculations, till at last he contrived materially to injure his fortune, and to involve his affairs in great perplexity.

In addition to Mary, he had two other daughters, Eliza and Everina, and three sons, Edward, James,

and Charles, all of whom survived their sister, the subject of this memoir.

Unfortunately for his family, Mr. Wollstonecroft was of a peculiar irascible and capricious temperament, at times being extravagantly fond of his children, at others, indulging in paroxysms of rage that were alarming, and from the blows which he would then occasionally deal around, not even his wife was exempt. Mary would frequently interpose to save her mother from such unmanly violence, and she occasionally lay whole nights upon the landing-place near the chamber-door, when she apprehended he was about to burst forth into transports of violence.

Towards her husband Mrs. Wollstonecroft evinced the utmost submission; but, whilst she treated her eldest daughter with great severity, most unjust partiality was evinced by her towards her eldest son, who appears to have been allowed to enact the petty despot towards his younger brothers and sisters.

Mary was not a favourite with either her father or mother, and the early part of her life appears to have been anything but happy. She probably alludes to herself, when, in one of her works, she speaks of "the petty cares which obscured the morning of her heroine's life; continual restraint in the most trivial matters; unconditional submission to orders, which, as a mere child, she soon discovered to be unreasonable, because inconsistent and contradictory; and the being often obliged to sit in the presence of her parents, for three or four hours together, without daring to utter a word."

But, if not greatly beloved, Mary Wollstonecroft was respected by her family, where the energy and supe-

riority of her character, which early developed itself, soon enabled her to become a sort of director and umpire. She was not formed for passive submission, but the keen sensibility with which she was endowed, and the strong sense of justice, which appears to have been a leading characteristic of her mind, and which led her to attempt thus early in life to assert the rights of others, as well as to feel bitter indignation for those wrongs which it was not in her power to redress, might, if properly directed in early youth, have produced very different and happier results. Her virtues were her own, but for the faults of her character, and the errors she committed in after life, we may perhaps find the origin and the cause in an erroneous and defective system of education, and in the unfortunate circumstances in which she was frequently placed. Had she experienced the customary kindness and tenderness with which children are usually treated by indulgent parents, her affectionate disposition would probably have induced her to make allowances for the defects of those with whom she lived. But perhaps there is nothing a child feels more keenly than injustice to itself and partiality to others; and the indignation aroused thereby in her ardent temperament, possibly led her friends to impute to a want of temper the feelings aroused by their own injustice.

But prudence and calmness do not appear to have been component parts of the character of Mary Wollstonecroft. She felt strongly, and she ever appears to have expressed her sentiments with warmth. Perhaps a little more patience and equanimity might have enabled her to effect much good to her family, with far less mental suffering to herself. For the want of these femi-

nine qualifications, it possibly arose that they never sufficiently estimated her worth, or appreciated the value of the sacrifices she made for their welfare.

But, however incompetent Mrs. Wollstonecroft, the mother, might have been, to have superintended the education of her children's minds, she appears fully to have understood the management of their bodies, and they all attained health and vigour, whilst sporting in the pure air and rural scenery of the forest where their infancy was passed. Amidst these picturesque and refreshing scenes, Mary acquired that exquisite relish for nature, which she ever after retained; and whilst her healthy frame induced her to feel a strong propensity to join with her brothers in their more hardy and manly sports, for dolls and other girlish amusements she ever entertained a profound contempt.

About the time that she completed her fifth year, (in 1765,) her father removed to a farm near the Whalebone, upon Epping Forest, a little off the Chelmsford road. In 1765, he again changed his residence, and hired a convenient house near Barking, in Essex, eight miles from town, where he remained three years, during which period his family became intimate with their neighbours the Gascoynes, with whom they were in the habit of frequent intercourse. More than twenty years afterwards, when Mrs. Godwin accompanied her husband in a visit to this spot, she reviewed with the feelings common to all persons of sensibility these scenes of her childhood. The house was uninhabited, and the garden in a wild and ruinous state, but she renewed her acquaintance with each familiar spot, enriched with a thousand little reminiscences of the past.

At Michaelmas, 1768, Mr. Wollstonecroft again mi-

grated to a farm near Beverley, in Yorkshire, where he remained six years, and where Mary received such instruction as the day-schools of that place afforded, and which, indeed, may be considered to have been all the tuition she ever received from others, her subsequent attainments having been almost entirely the result of her own industry and application.

She left Beverley at the age of fifteen, and her impressions of it were highly favourable, as it appeared to her girlish imagination to have been a "handsome town, surrounded by genteel families, and with a brilliant assembly." On revisiting it in after years, when on her route to Norway, great was her surprise to see how different everything appeared to the picture retained by her memory.

The restlessness of his disposition preventing Mr. Wollstonecroft from remaining long contented with any one occupation, he was now induced to abandon farming, and to enter into a commercial speculation, for which purpose he removed to Hoxton, near London. But his expectations were frustrated, and he returned, in 1776, to his agricultural pursuits. He went for a short time into Wales, but, either discontented or disappointed with this retirement, he soon afterwards again returned to the neighbourhood of London, fortunately for Mary, fixing at Walworth, near which place resided a young person with whom she had contracted a sincere friendship, and her intimacy with whom appears to have exercised a considerable influence upon her character.

Frances Blood was two years older than Mary Wollstonecroft; she resided at Newington Butts, and had been introduced to her by a clergyman named Clare, who lived next door to her father, and who was a

humourist in character, and in his appearance resembling Alexander Pope. He seems to have contracted a partiality for Mary, who not unfrequently spent days and weeks together with the recluse and his wife, and perhaps to him she might have been indebted for her first attempts at mental cultivation.

To Mary's vivid imagination the introduction to Miss Blood must have borne no small resemblance to Werter's first interview with Charlotte. On approaching the door of a small house, furnished with peculiar neatness and propriety, the first object that caught her eye was a young and elegant female, busily employed in feeding and attending her brothers and sisters, all considerably her juniors. With the romance of sixteen, Mary, before they parted, had already exchanged, in her heart, vows of an eternal friendship with this interesting creature, and, strange to say, those vows were kept.

Miss Blood was an exceedingly accomplished and well-informed young woman, and by the employment of her talents, she for some time maintained her father, mother, and family, though eventually she ruined her own health by her exertions. It was probably from her example that Mary first conceived the idea of providing for her own support by similar endeavours; whilst, from her intercourse and correspondence with her friend, she learnt to improve hourly in spelling and writing, as also in the style of her letters; and a generous emulation being awakened, she applied to literature with passion and earnestness, and soon surpassed the attainments of the instructress who had given her the first lessons in composition.

Mary's wish of supporting herself by her own exertions, at first met with considerable opposition from her

parents, and it was arranged, that in the event of her continuing to reside at home, she was henceforth to be allowed an apartment exclusively for her own use, and other requisites for study. They, however, subsequently gave an unwilling consent to her leaving them, and in the year 1778, at the age of nineteen, a proposal having been made for her to reside with a widow lady at Bath, named Dawson, as a companion, she accepted the situation, notwithstanding her having been informed that such were the peculiarities of the lady's temper, that she would find it impracticable to live with her. Nothing daunted with this account, Mary, though she found it by no means an inaccurate one, by constancy and firmness, rendered it tolerable to herself; whilst Mrs. Dawson occasionally confessed that she was the only person who had lived with her in that capacity, in the treatment of whom she had felt herself under any restraint.

With Mrs. Dawson she resided two years, when the declining health of her mother induced her to return home for the purpose of attending her. Her father was at this time residing at Enfield, near town, having given up farming, which, as he managed it, was rather a source of loss than of profit to him, and he was now living on the interest of the little property remaining to him.

Mary was assiduous in her attentions to her mother, whose illness was lingering but hopeless. At first they were accepted with acknowledgments and gratitude, but they were latterly rather exacted than received; and as the unfortunate patient would take nothing but from the hands of her daughter, whose rest was, in consequence, consequently broken, nature at last became so exhausted that she almost sank under her exertions.

The last words her mother uttered were, "A little patience, and all will be over!" an expression repeatedly referred to by Mary in her subsequent writings.

After her mother's death, Mary for some time resided with her friend, Frances Blood, at Walham Green, near Fulham, till summoned, in 1782, to attend her sister Eliza, who was married to a Mr. Bishop, and who, after a dangerous confinement, continued for some months in a very afflicting situation, during the whole of which period, Mary, whose ruling passion now seemed to be the desire of being useful, attended her with the utmost assiduity, till her perfect recovery.

The derangement of her father's affairs now becoming daily more distressing, and a small independent portion intended for herself and her sisters having been sacrificed in the general wreck, the necessity of exertion became more urgent, and at length Mary put into execution a project which she had for some time been revolving, which was, the opening a day-school, to be superintended by herself, Fanny Blood, and her two sisters.

Accordingly, in the year 1783, they began one at the village of Islington; but they subsequently removed to Newington Green; and here Mary formed several acquaintances who exercised considerable influence on her subsequent course of life. One of these was Dr. Richard Price, well known for his political and mathematical calculations, and for the simplicity of his manners and the benevolence of his character. A mutual regard was felt, and Mary was induced occasionally to attend his public instructions, though she had been brought up in the tenets of the Church of England, which indeed she regularly frequented till the year 1787; after which

period her attendance became less constant, though never wholly discontinued.

But though naturally of a devout turn, and considering the Deity as a being no less generous and kind, than great, wise, and exalted, having received but little religious instruction in her youth beyond the enforcement of rites and ceremonies, religion was with her a matter of taste and feeling, a system of her own creation, rather than that which is inculcated by revelation. It is to be observed, however, that though many of her ideas had certainly somewhat of an Unitarian tendency, she was never altogether a follower of those doctrines.

The Reverend John Hewlett, another acquaintance she formed about this period, was the first of her friends who suggested and recommended literature to her as a source of employment and pecuniary emolument,—advice which shortly afterwards she found occasion to follow.

During her residence at Newington-green, she was also introduced to Dr. Johnson, who treated her with particular kindness and attention, and after a long conversation with her, requested her to repeat her visit; but he died shortly after this interview.

The marriage of her friend, Fanny Blood, to Mr. Hugh Skeys, of Dublin, but who was at that time resident in Portugal, whither she accompanied her husband, took place in February, 1785; but her health derived little benefit from the change of air and climate, and it soon became so delicate, that Mary, shocked at the idea of her dying away from all her family, formed the resolution of going to Lisbon to attend her. From this she was earnestly dissuaded by her friends, on account of the expense it entailed, and also on account of her

school, of which she was the stay and prop, and which must materially suffer from her absence. She was not, however, to be deterred; and some kind friends having by their assistance enabled her to put her project into execution, she reached Lisbon in time to attend her beloved Fanny in her confinement and last illness, which proved fatal both to mother and child.

The visiting of foreign countries has undoubtedly the property of enlarging an observant mind, and such opportunities for mental developement were not lost upon Mary Wollstonecroft. She was admitted into the best company the Lisbon society afforded. The character of the natives, and particularly the dire effects of the superstitious religion established in that country, gave her thoughts ample employment.

After attending the obsequies of Mrs. Skeys, which it was necessary to perform in stealth and darkness, Mary returned home about the middle of December. On their voyage to England, they fell in with a French vessel in great distress, and in daily expectation of foundering at sea, at the same time being nearly destitute of provisions. Notwithstanding this melancholy situation, the English captain declined taking the crew on board, lest his own stock should not prove adequate to such an adtional number of mouths. The energy of Mary's character now displayed itself; she strenuously exerted herself in behalf of the sufferers, and threatening the captain with a severe account for the cruelty of his conduct, she finally prevailed, and had the satisfaction of reflecting that the persons in question, under Providence, probably owed their lives to her spirited interference.

On her arrival in England, she found that the prog-

nostications of her friends were correct, and that her school had suffered materially in her absence. No one was ever better calculated for the business of education than herself; for, notwithstanding the natural quickness of her disposition, with children she was peculiarly gentle and patient, and in her intercourse with them she was actuated entirely by kindness and sympathy. Those under her care were ever greatly attached to her, and careful to avoid giving her cause for displeasure; and at the same time, without servility, she had the art of recommending herself to their parents by her attention and obliging conduct.

The superior deference and court paid to her talents and merits appear to have caused some sort of jealousy in the breasts of the younger sisters, and as Mary's active and ardent temperament led her to greater exertions than themselves, a disproportionate share of the burdens and fatigues attendant upon the cares of a school fell to her lot. So that a general dissatisfaction induced them eventually to abandon the undertaking, and to seek for independence and employment in exertions of another nature.

It was about this period that, prompted by the desire to assist the parents of her beloved friend, Frances Skeys, in their project of removing to Ireland, Mary commenced her first literary undertaking, entitled, "Thoughts on the Education of Daughters, with Reflections on Female Conduct, in the more important Duties of Life," a small duodecimo volume, for the copyright of which she received ten guineas, through the intervention of Mr. Hewlett, from Mr. Johnson, the bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard; and this sum was

immediately devoted to the object which had induced her to undertake the work.

So much has since been written upon the subject of female education, that this little work would now only be considered as a very slight sketch of what is requisite. But it nevertheless abounds with good sense, and many excellent hints may be gathered from it. She thus feelingly alludes to the melancholy situation in which, too frequently, women find themselves, who have been "well, or at least fashionably educated," but who are left without any fortune or provision for their future subsistence.

"Few are the modes of earning a subsistence, and those very humiliating. Perhaps to be an humble companion to some rich old cousin, or, what is still worse, to live with strangers, who are so intolerably tyrannical that none of their own relations can bear to live with them, though they should even expect a fortune in reversion. It is impossible to enumerate the many hours of anguish such a person must spend. Above the servants, yet considered by them as a spy, and ever reminded of her inferiority when in conversation with the superior; if she cannot condescend to mean flattery, she has not a chance of being a favourite; and should any of the visitors take notice of her, and she for a moment forget her subordinate state, she is sure to be reminded of it."

If it be true of troubles, that

'Those best can paint them, who have felt them most,'

in describing the sorrows of the destitute female, dependent upon the caprice and whims of others, Mary

Wollstonecroft, probably drawing from nature, and from her own feelings and experience at Mrs. Dawson's, when she produced this spirited little sketch of "the humble companion," was well qualified to depict the horrors of the situation.

In speaking of dress, she well observes, that, "Dress ought to adorn the person, and not rival it. It may be simple, elegant, and becoming, without being expensive; and ridiculous fashion disregarded, while singularity is avoided. The beauty of dress is its not being conspicuous one way or the other; when it neither distorts or hides the human form by unnatural protuberances. If ornaments are much studied, a consciousness of being well dressed will appear in the face, and surely this mean pride does not give much sublimity to it." Upon the observance of the sabbath, "a respect for which ordinance is, she is persuaded, of the utmost consequence to national religion," she observes, that, "she never knew much social virtue to reside in a house where the sabbath was grossly violated."

The publication of this little work was the cause of her first introduction to Mr. Johnson, the bookseller, with whom she subsequently formed an intimate friendship, equally creditable to both. She consulted him both personally and by letter upon the subject, fully explaining her views, and requesting his advice and assistance as to its execution; and on her arrival in London in August, 1787, he kindly requested her to make his house her home, till she should have provided herself with a suitable residence. She accordingly availed herself of his invitation, and spent a few weeks with him and some other friends in the vicinity of the

metropolis, before she settled herself finally in George-street, on the Surrey side of Blackfriars-bridge.

Previous to this, she had availed herself, on the breaking up of her school establishment, of a proposition made to her, to undertake the office of governess in the family of Viscount Kingsborough, eldest son of the Earl of Kingston. The terms offered were advantageous, and as the accumulation of a small sum was desirable, before she entirely devoted herself to literary occupation, she resolved to avail herself of the situation for a short period. It was obtained for her through the medium of the Reverend Mr. Price, at that time one of the under masters of Eton school.

Mary remained in the family of Lord Kingsborough for little more than a twelvemonth, and she left behind her, both with themselves and their connexions, a most favourable impression. Lady Kingsborough had, from the best of motives, been induced to impose a variety of restrictions upon her daughters, particularly as to the books they were allowed to read. These prohibitions had produced their natural effects, in an inordinate desire for forbidden things and clandestine indulgences. These were removed by Mary, who undertook to govern them by their affections alone. The salutary effects of this new system were soon apparent, and the young ladies, who had hitherto looked upon every governess as an enemy, soon became attached to their new one, and were anxious for nothing which had not previously obtained her sanction. She soon obtained their confidence, and a cordial and affectionate friendship was formed between herself and her eldest pupil, the Honourable Margaret King, afterwards Countess of Mount

Cashel, of whose amiable disposition and intellectual powers, Mary ever spoke with the greatest applause.

Whilst at Lord Kingsborough's house in Ireland, where she appeared as one of the family, rather than a dependent, Mary acquired several valuable friends; though she was wont to mention the ludicrous distress of a woman of quality there, who having singled her out in a large party, and entered into a long conversation with her, was thoroughly dismayed and mortified on finding that her agreeable companion was *only* Miss King's governess!

Lord Kingsborough's family spent the summer of 1787 at Bristol Hot Wells, where Miss Wollstonecroft composed a little work entitled "Mary, a Fiction," consisting principally of the incidents of her own friendship with Fanny, and which has been much admired by those who prefer feeling and sentiment to plot and adventures in a story.

She was at this time to have accompanied the family of Lord Kingsborough on a projected tour to the Continent. But this idea having been abandoned, she shortly after closed her connexion with them, and resorted to literature as a means of subsistence.

Soon after she had taken up her abode in George-street, she produced a pleasing little work for children, entitled, "Original Stories from Real Life," some of which are narrated with great pathos; and the whole is well calculated to inspire love and reverence for the Deity, and kindness and benevolence to all, but especially towards inferiors, and also to domestic animals. She also compiled a series of extracts in verse and prose, on the plan of Dr. Enfield's "Speaker," which bears the

title of "The Female Reader." It is, however, printed with another name in the title-page.

Translation having been recommended to her by her bookseller, as the easiest and surest source of pecuniary profit, she improved herself in the French language, with which she had before but a slight acquaintance, and likewise acquired the Italian and German languages. From the French, she commenced a translation of "The New Robinson," in which, however, she was anticipated by another person; and from the Dutch she translated, new modelled, and abridged, a work called "Young Grandison," a series of letters, in which the youthful hero is intended to be a model of perfection among children of a lesser growth, as Richardson's hero is with "children of six feet high," as Newberry's delightful though now antiquated little gilt books were wont to term grown-up men and women.

In the year 1788, Mr. Johnson instituted the Analytical Review, in which Mary took a considerable share, and in which she appears to have exercised no inconsiderable degree of independence of opinion in her remarks. Dr. Johnson's Sermons, published as Dr. Taylor's, were among the works reviewed by her. "The Cave of Fancy," a sort of allegorical tale, was also begun about this time, though never completed by her; and she translated "Necker on the Importance of Religious Opinions," and also made an abridgment of Lavater's work on Physiognomy.

But perhaps the work which most generally recommended her at this period to young people, was her abridgment and translation from the German of Salzmann's "Elements of Morality," which was published

in three volumes duodecimo. Some incongruities and inconsistencies are apparent from the transplanting the family of the continental merchant, with their foreign customs and ideas, to the English city of Bristol. But still, notwithstanding numerous minor faults, perhaps there are few that have read the work, in their childhood, without retaining a partiality for Mr. and Mrs. Jones, and their children Charles and Mary, together with the curate and his family, and for the old-fashioned pictures with which the work is adorned.

That it was not for personal independence alone that Mary laboured, is apparent from the assistance which her literary employments enabled her to afford her family and friends, and which she bestowed on them with a lavish hand. To qualify her sisters to obtain the situation of governesses in private families, she placed one in a school near London, first as a parlour boarder, and afterwards as a teacher, whilst the other she sent to Paris, where she remained for two years. Her brother James, who had been to sea, she first took into her own house, and then sent him to Woolwich for instruction, to enable him to obtain a respectable situation in the royal navy, where he shortly afterwards was made a lieutenant; and her youngest and favourite brother, Charles, who had been articled to the eldest, Edward, an attorney in the Minories, she removed from thence, not being satisfied with the place, and having sent him to a farmer for instruction, she then fitted him out for America, where his speculations, founded upon the basis she had provided, were said to be extremely prosperous.

As for her father, whose affairs were become too embarrassed for him to manage, she almost wholly supported him from her own funds, till the day of her death;

she also used the utmost exertions to disentangle his perplexed affairs, though without avail, through the counter-influence of a near relation.

In addition to these exertions in behalf of her family, of which she might truly be said to be the good genius, she took under her protection a little girl of seven years old, the niece of Mrs. J. Hunter, and of the then Mrs. Skeys, for whose mother, recently deceased, she had entertained a sincere friendship.

During this period of quiet and unostentatious utility, her friendly connexion with Mr. Johnson was established on a still firmer basis, he having contracted for her a very sincere regard, and treating her, in many respects, with the kindness of a parent. At his house she became acquainted with many literary characters, and among those who possessed her esteem were Mr. Bonnycastle, the mathematician, Fuseli, George Fordyce, and many others.

Her intimacy with Fuseli, the celebrated painter, was, however, productive of anything but favourable effects upon her happiness and subsequent welfare. Although her faculties might have been developed by her intercourse with him, yet she appears to have imbibed from him various wild and visionary ideas, and her moral and religious principles seem to have been, in no inconsiderable degree, undermined by her association with him. The platonic friendship, which she flattered herself was to continue on a staple foundation, merged, with her, into a sentiment of softer feeling, and becoming a source of perpetual torment to her, she at last resolved to try the effect of absence and of change of scene, and shortly after, in 1792, she went over to Paris, then in the midst of its bloody and terrible revolution.

Mary's attention had first been drawn to the subject by the publication, in November, 1790, of Burke's celebrated "Reflections on the French Revolution," when, like many other enthusiastic and generous temperaments, feeling the warmest interest in the struggle that was then going on, she seized her pen, and in the first burst of indignation, an emotion of which she was peculiarly susceptible, she commenced her Answer to his "Reflections."

It was sent to the press, as is often the case with works the early publication of which is deemed of importance, before the composition was completed, and when she had arrived at about the middle of her undertaking, she was seized with that torpor and lassitude which it is too frequently the fate of those engaged in literary undertakings to experience, and which made her repent of her project. Calling one evening upon her publisher, as she was in the habit of doing, for the purpose of relieving her mind by an hour's conversation, she, with the habitual ingenuousness of her disposition, described to him her feelings; when Mr. Johnson immediately, in the most kind and friendly manner, requested her to feel no uneasiness about the sheets already printed, if she did not feel inclined to continue them. Mary, who wanted stimulus, and who had not expected to meet with such kindness, had her pride aroused thereby, and she immediately went home, and proceeded with and brought her work to a conclusion without delay.

Her biographer and husband, Godwin, allows that though "her 'Answer,' which was the first of the numerous ones that appeared, obtained extraordinary success; yet, marked as it is with the vehemence and impetuousness of its eloquence, it is certainly chargeable

with a too contemptuous and intemperate treatment of the great man against whom its attack is directed."

But this circumstance was not injurious to the success of the publication. Burke had been warmly loved by the most liberal and enlightened friends of freedom, and they were proportionately inflamed and disgusted by the fury of his assaults, upon what some deemed "its sacred cause."

It was in the month of November, 1791, that Mary Wollstonecroft first met, at the house of a mutual friend, her future husband, the celebrated writer Godwin, together with Thomas Paine and some other individuals. Godwin, all curiosity to see the author of "The Rights of Man," felt none to see the authoress of "The Rights of Women," and their views on various subjects not generally coinciding, but in most of which Mary had the best of the argument, their mutual impressions of each other were, at that time, anything but favourable. In addition to this, Paine, whom Godwin wished to hear talk, proved somewhat taciturn, whilst Mary maintained her share in the conversation with her accustomed animation; "he, in consequence, heard her very frequently when he wished to hear Paine," and in two or three subsequent interviews in the following years, they made but small progress towards cordial friendship.

The applause which her "Answer to Burke's Reflections" had received, naturally tended to increase her confidence in her own powers, and shortly after she proceeded to the composition of her most celebrated work, "The Vindication of the Rights of Women," the first part of which was begun, carried on, and completed, in the state in which it now remains, in the short period of six weeks. In it appears throughout a bold and ori-

ginal way of thinking, and she successfully exposes the errors of those theorists who would make woman the mere plaything of man, the eastern sultana, in short, without seeking to inform the understanding or to cultivate the affections. She boldly attacks the opinions of Rousseau, whose system would reduce the female sex almost to the level of the brute creation, and she also ably animadverts on "the mellifluous precepts" of Dr. Fordyce, and other writers, who would make all female virtue to consist in graceful manners and pleasing conduct.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged, that in avoiding the affectation of over delicacy, the refinement of modern manners is shocked by the mode, rather than by the matter, of certain of her strictures on habits and customs. Her own sportive idea that it sometimes occurred to her that superior women had masculine minds in a female frame, appears almost realized in herself, as many of her sentiments are, certainly, anything but feminine; so little indeed, that those whose curiosity led them to seek the acquaintance of the authoress of "The Rights of Women," were surprised to meet a female, lovely and engaging in appearance and manners, instead of the sturdy, masculine virago their imaginations had framed to themselves from the perusal of her work.

Her first residence in Paris was in the spacious mansion of Monsieur Fillietaz, to which she had been invited, but who was absent at the moment of her arrival; and the gloominess of her mind, arising from the state of her feelings towards Mr. Fuseli, led her to look with dissatisfaction on everything she saw. In this temper she began, though she never completed, "A Series of Letters on the Present Character of the French Nation."

It was at Neuilly, a village near Paris, where she resided, in a solitary house in the midst of a large garden, with no other inhabitant than herself and the gardener, an old man, who performed for her many of the offices of a domestic, that she conceived and executed the greatest part of her "Historical and Moral View of the French Revolution," in which were incorporated many of the observations collected for her letters. In the evening she was accustomed to refresh herself by a walk in a neighbouring wood, from which the old man would in vain seek to dissuade her, by divers narrations of horrible robberies and murders that had been committed there.

Whilst in France, Mary made many agreeable acquaintances, and a very sincere friendship was formed between herself and Helen Maria Williams, who at that time resided in Paris.

At the house of Mr. Christie she first met with Mr. Imlay, a native of America, with whom she subsequently formed the unfortunate connexion which was destined to cast a blight over her happiness and reputation. She at first objected to a marriage with him; from motives of generosity, as she was unwilling to involve him in her own family embarrassments, or to make him responsible for her pecuniary engagements. But she subsequently assumed his name, and obtained a certificate from the American ambassador of her being the wife of a native of that country, marriage being there considered merely as a civil ceremony.

Mary's imagination appears to have invested Mr. Imlay with every possible perfection; but he seems to have been of a cold and calculating disposition, but little suited to the enthusiasm of her nature; and his

commercial speculations soon produced several necessary separations, which eventually led to an eternal one, as he took advantage of the want of legality in the tie which united them, to treat her occasionally with coldness and indifference.

Notwithstanding this, on Mr. Imlay being involved in a question of considerable difficulty, respecting a mercantile adventure in Norway, which required the presence of some judicious agent, Mary undertook to make the voyage thither, and to execute the business for him; and, in about a week after she had formed the resolution, accompanied by her French maid Marguerite, and her child Frances, who was born at Havre, on the fourteenth of May, 1794, she set out from London in May 1795, upon this new expedition, an account of which she afterwards published under the title of "Letters written during a short residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark."

In her way thither she visited the north of England, and speaking of a town there, (probably Beverley,) she says—"It did not please me so well as formerly—it appeared so diminutive; and when I found that many of the inhabitants had lived in the same houses ever since I left it, I could not help wondering how they could have vegetated, whilst I was running over a world of sorrow, snatching at pleasure, and throwing off prejudices." She had left it the giddy, thoughtless girl of fifteen—when she returned, she was the married woman of thirty-six, broken with trouble and adversity.

Having passed, in the night time, through contrary winds, the place in Sweden where she wished to land, she with some difficulty prevailed upon the captain to send her on shore in an open boat. On landing she

proceeded to Gottenburg, and from thence to Tonsberg and Laurvig, in Norway. She subsequently visited Christiana, and then returning to Gottenburg, she crossed over to Copenhagen, from whence she proceeded to Hamburg, and afterwards took lodgings at Altona, where at that time resided many of the sufferers from the French Revolution. Madame la Fayette had just left that place, in order to endeavour, at Vienna, to procure the enlargement of her husband, or permission to share his prison; and Madame de Genlis was residing there under a feigned name, together with many others of less note, but of higher rank.

Mary's aversion to commerce appears to have been increased during this expedition, though she everywhere seems to have been received and treated with the greatest hospitality. She observes, that "a man ceases to love humanity, and then individuals, as he advances in the chase after wealth; as one clashes with his interest, the other with his pleasures; to business, as it is termed, everything must give way, nay, is sacrificed, and all the endearing charities of citizen, husband, brother, become empty names."

She spoke feelingly, for she was nearly broken-hearted with the coldness and callousness of the man of trade, to whom she had sacrificed everything.

On her return to London in October, the desperation of her mind was such, that, in a fit of frenzy, she made a criminal attempt at self-destruction, by throwing herself off Putney Bridge into the Thames. From this she was rescued, but the torture she experienced in restoration to life was so extreme, that she afterwards stated that nothing could ever induce her to undergo the same terrible sensations again.

Such violence of conduct was, however, far more likely to estrange than to restore the affections of Mr. Imlay; and so it proved; for after various scenes and attempts at reconciliation, they finally separated in March, 1796.

Mr. Godwin and she had again met in the following January; but it was not till after he had read her very interesting "Letters from Norway," which were published about that time, that he felt any attachment for her. The impression made upon him by their perusal was extraordinary and lasting. He well says of it, "Perhaps a book of travels that so irresistibly seizes on the heart, never, in any other instance, found its way from the press. The occasional harshness and ruggedness of character that diversify her vindication of the Rights of Women, here totally disappear. If ever there was a book calculated to make a man in love with its author, this appears to be the book. She speaks of her sorrows, in a way that fills us with melancholy, and dissolves us in tenderness, at the same time that she displays a genius which commands all our admiration. Affliction had tempered her heart to a softness almost more than human; and the gentleness of her spirit seems precisely to accord with all the romance of unbounded attachment."

Her acquaintance with Mr. Godwin soon led to a mutual attachment, and eventually, notwithstanding the erroneous theories of both parties, they found it necessary to comply with the laws of morality and the customs of society, and a marriage took place about April, 1797, or, at all events, it was then first declared to the public.

They took a house in the Polygon, Somers Town,—though Mr. Godwin engaged an apartment a few doors

off, for the purpose of study and literary occupations,—being of opinion that husband and wife may be too much in the society of each other. Influenced by this idea, he was wont to repair to his solitude, as soon as he rose, and generally did not make his appearance at home until dinner-time. They also sought for occasions of deviating from the generally established rule of a married couple visiting together, under the hope of finding more variety subsequently in the society of each other.

The Godwins were surprised and mortified to find that the legal union which they had imagined was to have conciliated the prejudices of society, produced precisely the contrary effect. But this is not, in fact, so singular as it appeared to them; for so long as Mary kept the name of Imlay, she was probably considered as the wife of Mr. Imlay, in equity, if not in law; and the certificate of the American ambassador proved that *he* considered them as legally married, though, perhaps, in an irregular manner. When, however, Mrs. Imlay became Mrs. Godwin, there could be no doubt upon the subject, that either her former or her present connexion must be an improper one; and the consequences were, that many of her former friends and acquaintances shunned her society.

Among those whom she more particularly regretted were Mrs. Inchbald and Mrs. Siddons; but both of these ladies, being in somewhat peculiar situations themselves, from their connexion with the theatre, were obliged to be exceedingly careful whom they visited. Mrs. Siddons, however, appreciated fully Mrs. Godwin's character, and of her Letters from Norway she observed, they were read by no one who was in possession of more

"reciprocity of feeling, or more deeply impressed with admiration of the writer's extraordinary powers."

Notwithstanding these various drawbacks to their felicity, the Godwins seemed for a short time to have enjoyed happiness as unalloyed as it is possible to meet with in this transitory world. Mary had now met with one who could enter into her feelings, and appreciate her character, and the serenity of her countenance, and the tranquillity of her manners, bespoke a heart at ease.

Several literary projects were now formed and commenced by her, of which only fragments remain; but the principal work which latterly engaged her attention, was a novel, entitled "The Wrongs of Women." This, however, she never lived to complete, and perhaps fortunately so, as though she ably pourtrays the injustice frequently done to the weaker sex, yet her plot is decidedly an immoral one, inasmuch as her heroine, a married woman, is represented as forming an attachment to another man during her husband's lifetime.

In the midst of her felicity, she was called upon to resign that existence, which two years before she had despairingly and impiously attempted to cut short. In consequence of an alarm, a somewhat premature confinement took place; and, as usual, acting upon her own theories rather than upon the common practices of society, she had no nurse, nor would she allow herself to be attended by any one but a female. When, subsequently, the first professional assistance was called in, it was too late, and, after lingering some days, she expired September 10, 1797.

Her remains were deposited in the churchyard of the parish church of St. Pancras, Middlesex, where a plain

monument was erected to her memory, with the following inscription:—

MARY WOLLSTONECROFT GODWIN,
AUTHOR OF
"A VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN,"
BORN 27 APRIL, 1759.
DIED 11 SEPTEMBER, 1797.

The child, whose birth was the cause of her mother's death, and who inherited her name and her talents, still lives, and is the widow of the celebrated poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley, who was drowned in the Mediterranean in 1822.

It is to be lamented that Mary Wollstonecroft, whom nature, when she so lavishly endowed her with virtues and talents, evidently meant should be a bright pattern of perfection to her sex, should, by her erroneous theories and false principles, have rendered herself instead, rather the beacon by which to warn the woman of similar endowments with herself, of the rocks upon which enthusiasm and imagination are too apt to wreck their possessor. If error even in a Mary Wollstonecroft could not be overlooked, what woman can hope to offend with impunity against the laws of society?

NOTE.

The following remarks, from the pen of a well-known living writer, were obligingly communicated after the above memoir was written.

"No woman (with the exception of the greatest woman, Madame de Staël) has made any impression on the public mind during the last fifty years, to be compared with

Mrs. Godwin. This was perhaps more especially true in the provinces, where her new and startling doctrines were seized with avidity, and acted upon in some particulars to considerable extent, particularly by married women. The publication of her memoirs by her husband after her death, neutralized the acid she had thrown into the cup of domestic felicity, by exhibiting errors which love should have concealed, thus reducing the idol they had worshipped to an image of clay; and she became forgotten much sooner than she deserved to be, as a woman of powerful mind and acute sensibility. I have seen a series of letters written by her when very young, and living at Beverley, which evinced neither knowledge nor precocious talent, and think she did not attain the great faculty she afterwards evinced, until she was nearly thirty.

"She was, I have been told by an intimate friend, very pretty and feminine in manners and person; much attached to those very observances she decries in her work; so that if any gentleman did not fly to open the door as she approached it, or take up the handkerchief she dropped, she showered on him the full weight of reproach and displeasure; an inconsistency she would have doubtless despised in a disciple.

"I have heard the late Miss Jewsbury express an intention of so remodelling the "Rights of Women," that it would not fail to become again attractive, and she thought useful. She married, and therefore gave it up, or we might be enabled to do Mrs. Godwin justice for her real benevolence, her ardent zeal, and her unflinching resolution, without adverting to the fallible points of her arguments, or the weakness and suffering which belonged to her conduct and experience."

WORKS.

Thoughts on the Education of Daughters, 1786.

Mary, a Fiction, 1787.

Original Stories from Real Life, 1788.

The Female Reader.

Young Grandison—translation.

Necker on the Importance of Religious Opinions—translation.

Lavater's Physiognomy, abridged—translation.

Elements of Morality—translation.

Answer to Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution, 1791.

Vindication of the Rights of Women.

Historical and Moral View of the French Revolution.

Letters from Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, 1796.

Posthumous Works—The Wrongs of Women—Letters to Imlay, &c.

MRS. RADCLIFFE.

Mrs. Anne Radcliffe was born in London, on the 9th July, 1764. She was the only child of William and Anne Ward, who, though engaged in trade, were persons of great respectability, and were well connected; Mr. Ward's mother having been the sister of the famous surgeon Cheselden, and Mrs. Ward's mother, Mrs. Oates, the sister of Dr. Jebb and the aunt of Sir Richard Jebb. She was also related to the celebrated Bishop Jebb, and to Dr. Halifax, Bishop ofGloucester.

Miss Ward received the education usual to girls in her rank of life; but her intelligence and docility rendered her a great favourite with several of her relations, who moved in a somewhat higher sphere than her parents, and at their houses she was introduced to several persons of literary eminence and distinction. Her mother's brother-in-law, Mr. Bentley, of the firm of Wedgwood and Bentley, was extremely partial to his niece, and she was a favourite guest at Chelsea, and afterwards at Turnham Green, where Mr. and Mrs. Bentley resided. Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Piozzi, and Athenian Stuart, were amongst the visitors there.

Although her friends seem in a certain degree to have appreciated her quickness, they appear not to have been aware of the extent of her talents. Naturally diffident and shy, and brought up among persons decidedly of the old school, whose somewhat contracted notions were totally averse to the idea of authorship, it was not till after her union with Mr. Radcliffe that she burst upon the world as the creator of a new class of English romance.

Miss Ward, at nineteen, though somewhat low in stature, had an excellently proportioned figure. Her complexion was beautiful, as indeed was her whole countenance, particularly her eyes, eyebrows, and mouth. It was one of her great delights to contemplate the beauties of nature, particularly those on a grand scale. To hear good music was another. She had also a gratification in listening to (on account of their sound merely) the recital of passages from the Greek and Latin writers, though she was totally unacquainted with these languages.

Although well qualified to shine in society, Miss Ward's diffidence and want of self-confidence prevented her from appearing to advantage in conversation, even with those of far less capacity than herself. Indeed, she seems ever to have felt a distaste to the familiarity of modern manners, and though free and cheerful with her friends and relations, with strangers she preserved the more formal politeness of manner in which she had been brought up.

In her twenty-third year Miss Ward was married, at Bath, where her parents then resided, to Mr. Radcliffe, a graduate of Oxford, and originally a student of law, which profession he afterwards abandoned when he

became the proprietor of "The English Chronicle," in the management of which he took an active part.

They were at this time residing in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, and Mrs. Radcliffe was induced to employ her solitary and leisure hours in writing, in which she was encouraged by her husband; and as her diffidence gave way to her consciousness of talent, she proceeded in her undertaking with great rapidity and success. The evening was ever with her a favourite time for composition, when her spirits were in their happiest tone, and she was most free from interruption; so that she frequently astonished her husband, on his return, with the quality and quantity of what she had produced during his absence.

The first romance which Mrs. Radcliffe gave to the public, was entitled "The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne;" and though there may be found in this work strong traces of her talent for the wild, romantic, and mysterious, yet it can by no means be considered as equal to her subsequent performances. It appeared in 1789, two years after her marriage, when she was but twenty-five years of age.

Her next performance, "The Sicilian Romance," was published in the following year, 1790, and attracted considerable attention. It was very far superior to the generality of romances that issued from the press at that period; it evinced much of that exuberance of imagination which was one of the principal characteristics of Mrs. Radcliffe's writings.

With a facility of composition, in which Mrs. Radcliffe was only equalled by her contemporary Mrs. Charlotte Smith, she, in the succeeding year, left her two former performances far behind, by the production of "The

Romance of the Forest," which, by some, is considered the most attractive of her works. This at once placed her in the first rank among the writers of that peculiar style of romance, of which she may almost be said to be the foundress. She was the first to introduce in her narratives that beautiful and imaginative tone of natural description hitherto exclusively applied to poetry, and Sir Walter Scott asserts her right "to be considered as the first poetess of romantic fiction." She has indeed occasionally introduced into her works several very pleasing songs, and pieces of fugitive verse, which are, perhaps, not properly appreciated, from the anxiety ever felt by the reader of her romances to proceed with the story. Indeed, "the true lovers of poetry," as Mrs. Barbauld observes, "are almost apt to regret its being brought in as an accompaniment to narrative, where it is generally neglected; for not one in a hundred of those who can read and can judge of novels, are at all able to appreciate the merits of a copy of verses, and the common reader is always impatient to get on with the story."

Mrs. Radcliffe's longest and most popular work, entitled "The Mysteries of Udolpho," appeared in 1794, and for this she received what was then deemed the unprecedented sum of five hundred pounds, from Messrs. Robinson; a sum then so unusually large for a work of fiction, that Mr. Cadell, who had much experience in these matters, did not hesitate to offer a wager that it had not been given.

This work had the singular merit of interesting not only the very young, and those who seek only for amusement when they read, but of attracting the admiration of men of wit and talent. Dr. Joseph Warton,

the head master of Winchester School, told Mr. Robinson, that far advanced in life as he was, yet was he so fascinated with this romance, that he could not go to bed till he had finished it, and he actually sat up half the night for that purpose. Fox and Sheridan both spoke of it in the highest terms of praise. Sir Walter Scott mentions it with the greatest commendation. He says, "The very name was fascinating; and the public, who rushed upon it with all the eagerness of curiosity, rose from it with unsated appetite. When a family was numerous, the volumes always flew, and were sometimes torn from hand to hand; and the complaints of those whose studies were thus interrupted, were a general tribute to the genius of the author." He feelingly and touchingly adds, "Another might be found of a different and higher description, in the dwelling of the lonely invalid, or unregarded votary of celibacy, who was bewitched away from a sense of solitude, of indisposition, of the neglect of the world, or of secret sorrow, by the potent charm of this mighty enchantress." Even the author of "The Pursuits of Literature," "albeit unused to the *praising* mood," describes her as "The mighty magician of 'The Mysteries of Udolpho,' bred and nourished by the Florentine muses, in their secret, solitary caverns, amid the paler shrines of gothic superstition, and in all the dreariness of enchantment; a poetess whom Ariosto would with rapture have acknowledged as

'La nudrita
Damigella Trivulgio al sacro speco.'"

In the summer of the same year, 1794, Mrs. Radcliffe accompanied her husband on a tour through Holland and the western frontier of Germany, returning down

the Rhine. This was the first and only time she ever quitted England, though so well and so vividly has she pourtrayed the scenery of southern countries, as to have given rise to a general conviction that she had in person visited the places she describes. It was even asserted in the Edinburgh Review for May, 1823, that she had gone with her husband to Italy, when he was attached to one of the British embassies, and that "it was on that occasion she imbibed the taste for picturesque scenery, and the obscure and wild superstitions of mouldering castles, of which she has made so beautiful a use in her romances."

After their return from the Continent, Mr. and Mrs. Radcliffe made a tour to the English lakes, and when travelling, it was Mrs. Radcliffe's custom to commit to paper the impressions and events of the day; which, it has been beautifully observed, is "a happy mode of pourtraying the vivid pleasures of life,—which tends to impart a unity to our intellectual being, which enables us to live over again the unbroken line of existence; to gather up the precious drops of happiness, that they be not lost; and, in the last moments of feeling and thought, to find 'a glass which shows us many more.'"

Her notes and remarks made during this tour were published in 1795, in a well-written work, entitled "A Journey through Holland, and the Western Frontier of Germany, with a Return down the Rhine; to which are added, Observations during a Tour to the Lakes of Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland."

The fifth and last romance which during her lifetime Mrs. Radcliffe gave to the public, was entitled "The Italian," which appeared in 1797, and for which she received eight hundred pounds. It was considered as

equal, and, by some, superior, to its predecessors, though perhaps, with general readers, it has not retained an equal share of popularity with "The Romance of the Forest," and "The Mysteries of Udolpho." In "The Italian," Mrs. Radcliffe successfully attempted a new style of horrible mysteries, in the machinations of the popish religion, and in the powerful machinery of the Inquisition; and though perhaps not strictly correct in all her descriptions, her imaginative genius is fully displayed in her delineations.

Although, from her talents and reputation, Mrs. Radcliffe would have been an ornament to every society, she appears to have nervously shrunk from her well-earned celebrity. Indeed, in so retired a manner did she live, as to induce an idea among the gossips of the day, that she was either dead or shut up in a mad-house, at the very time that she was enjoying, in seclusion, the pleasures of a well-cultivated mind. She, however, engaged in no other literary performance after 1797, and her husband and herself seem, though they lived in or near town, to have frequently indulged in excursions, during the summer and autumn, principally on the southern coast, Kent, Sussex, Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight. On these occasions she generally kept a journal, some extracts of which have been published, probably in the very manner in which they were written. It were to be wished that the whole of them were given to the public, as, though mere notes, the master hand is visible throughout.

In the autumn of 1797, Mr. and Mrs. Radcliffe made a tour round the coast of Kent. In 1798, they visited Portsmouth, the Isle of Wight, &c. The same year she lost her father, Mr. Ward. Her mother died on

the 14th of March 1800, to which the following touching allusion is made, whilst wandering among the South Downs on the coast of Sussex, at Seaford, in July of the same year. "In this month, on the 24th of July, my dear father died two years since. On the 14th of last month, my poor mother followed him! I am the last leaf on the tree! The melancholy greatness with which I was surrounded this evening, made me very sensible of this."

She well describes the country around East Bourne, the "immense retrospect of sea and land, from the top of Beachy Head," and the "surprising appearance of the sea, which seemed to rise so high, that it could scarce be distinguished from the sky. Ships looked like birds in the sky. Nothing seen but great and simple objects—the round sea, the uncultivated headlands."

Her walk under that mighty precipice, the steepest and the boldest on the southern coast, she thus describes:—

July 23.—Walked to the shore and along it, with a hope of having some sight of the sea-point of Beachy Head from beneath it, though four or five miles off. The beach impassable by any sort of carriage. * * * Large blocks of granite imbedded on the shore, and extending to the waves, which rage and foam over them, giving one dreadful ideas of shipwreck. Sometimes, patches of gravelly sand, or pebbles, soon ending against masses of granite, or chalk, between which it is difficult to walk. Some of them must be stepped upon. Within half a mile of the great point, unable to proceed further, sat down on a block, wearied out, desiring William (Mr. Radcliffe) to go on—he was soon hid by a turn of the cliffs. Almost frightened at the solitude

and vastness of the scene, though Chance (her favourite dog) was with me. Tide almost out; only sea in front; white cliffs rising over me, but not impending; strand all around, a chaos of rocks and fallen cliffs, far out into the waves; sea-fowl whirling and screaming; all disappeared behind the point, beyond which is the great cliff; but we had doubled point after point, in the hope that this would be the next, and had been much deceived in the distance by these great objects; after one remote point gained, another and another succeeded, and still the great cliff was unattained; the white precipices beautifully variegated with plants, green, blue, yellow, and poppy."

After coasting along the sea-shore to Dover, she thus concludes her journey.

"In all our tour we saw nothing so fine and beautiful as the views of sea and land from the Downs over East Bourne, the sweet repose of the landscape and sea-bay to Hastings, and the grandeur of the various views, on all sides between the valleys of the South Downs, and even above these summits, circling nearly the whole horizon, with soft blue waves."

The following year, Mr. and Mrs. Radcliffe visited the New Forest and the Isle of Wight, and in the autumn of 1802, they made an excursion to Leicester and Warwick, Kenilworth, Oxford, and Woodstock. Mrs. Radcliffe was particularly struck with Kenilworth Castle, and spent much time in exploring its history after she had visited the ruins.

In the following winter she wrote the tale of "Gaston de Blondeville, or the Court of King Henry the Third, keeping Festival in Arden." It was not intended for publication, and after it was completed, it

was laid aside for some time, when, having forgotten the incidents, she speaks of having perused it with nearly the same interest as if it had been written by a stranger. After her death, this romance was printed (in 1826) together with a Memoir by Mr. Sergeant Talfourd, and several poems, the longest of which is entitled "St. Albans Abbey, a Metrical Tale."

Mrs. Radcliffe has often been found fault with by critics, for resolving some of her most fearful mysteries into causes too trivial for the terror excited. To Gaston De Blondeville this defect cannot be imputed, as it abounds with the supernatural, for which no explanation is offered or attempted. Though the story, as a story, is not particularly interesting, yet is the interest strongly awakened by the various events, and the semblance to an old chronicled tale is well preserved. It cannot certainly rank with her three previous romances, but it has merits of its own, and, perhaps, few persons but Mrs. Radcliffe could so well have executed the idea.

Her metrical tale, "St. Albans Abbey," is founded on what occurred in that city at the period of the first Battle of St. Albans, and the first of the long series of battles between the houses of York and Lancaster, which took place at noon on the 22nd of May 1445, in which the former were victorious.

Some of the descriptions are very vivid, and throughout the whole runs a sort of dreamy, visionary horror, that Mrs. Radcliffe's pen has almost the exclusive power of awakening in the breast of the reader.

The other poems appear to have been composed casually, whenever a poetical idea struck her. But though some of these performances are above the common run of verses, it is to her prose works she must

trust for her name being handed down to posterity as a first-rate writer in her peculiar line.

Mrs. Radcliffe's prose may be almost said to be more poetical than her verses. Sir Walter Scott observes, that "the praise may be claimed for her, of having been the first to introduce into her prose fictions a beautiful and fanciful tone of natural description and impressive narrative, which had hitherto been exclusively applied to poetry. Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, even Walpole, though writing upon an imaginative subject, are decidedly prose authors. Mrs. Radcliffe has a title to be considered as the first poetess of romantic fiction, that is, if actual rhythm shall not be deemed essential to poetry."

The following specimens of the kind of description referred to by Scott, though carelessly written in her journal, and certainly not designed for publication, are quite equal to anything in her published works.

"How sweet is the cadence of the distant surge! It seemed, as we sat in our inn, as if a faint peal of far-off bells mingled with the sounds on shore, sometimes heard, sometimes lost: the first note of the beginning, and the last of the falling peal, seeming always the most distant. This resounding of the distant surge on a rocky shore might have given Shakspeare his idea when he makes Ferdinand, in "The Tempest," hear, amidst the storm, bells ringing his father's dirge; a music which Ariel also commemorates, together with the sea-wave—

> 'Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell,
> Ding, dong, bell!'

This chiming of the surge is when the tide is among

the rocks, and the wind, blowing from the sea, bears and softens all the different notes of the waves to a distance, in one harmonious cadence; as in a concert, your distance from the orchestra blends the different instruments into a richer and softer harmony."

The above was written at Steephill, in the Isle of Wight, during a tour they were making there in the autumn of 1811. The following is a description of the scenery from Windsor Terrace:—

"We stood in the shade on the North Terrace, where a platform projects over the precipice, and beheld a picture perfect in its kind. The massy tower at the end of the East Terrace stood up high in the shade; but immediately from behind it the moonlight spread, and showed the flat line of wall at the end of that terrace, with the figure of a sentinel moving against the light, as well as the profile of the dark precipice below. Beyond it was the park, and a vast distance, in the faint light, which spread over the turf, touched the avenues, and gave fine contrast to the deep shades of the wooded precipice on which we stood, and to the whole line of buildings which rise on the North Terrace. Above this high dark line the stars appeared with a very sublime effect. No sound but the faint clinking of the soldier's accoutrements as he paced on watch, and the remote voices of people turning the end of the East Terrace, appearing for a moment in the light there and vanishing. In a high window of the tower a light. Why is it so sublime to stand at the foot of a dark tower, and look up its height to the sky and the stars?"

As they advanced in life, Mr. and Mrs. Radcliffe naturally became more and more attached to the comforts of home, and they seem to have given up their

more distant excursions to the coast and other parts of England. Instead of making journeys of length, they now hired a carriage for the summer months, in which they made frequent trips to beautiful spots in the neighbourhood of London, and perhaps there are few metropolises that can offer so many within the circuit of twenty-five miles. On these occasions they dined and spent the day, returning home in the evening. Esher, Stanmore, Richmond, Southgate, and Harrow, were their favourite places of resort, especially the latter, where they chose their room, not from its size, but from the beauty of the view it commanded from the window.

Mrs. Radcliffe was also much attached to St. Albans, the antiquities of which she explored with great zeal; and she has celebrated this locality by making it the scene of her longest poem.

From 1812 to 1815, she spent much time at Windsor and its neighbourhood, and became intimately acquainted with the recesses of its forest, and the most beautiful spots of this regal domain. She knew the peculiarities of every remarkable tree, and with reference to their age and to the analogy she fancied between them and the different lines of monarchs, she was wont to describe them as "Plantaganet oak, Tudor beeches, and Stuart elms." She frequently expressed her feelings in verse on these occasions.

It may perhaps be considered a somewhat singular circumstance, from the fanciful and imaginative style of Mrs. Radcliffe's writings, that she was minutely attentive to her domestic duties, and kept an exact account of her daily disbursements, until a very short time before her death. She might possibly feel, in the mecha-

nical management of her household affairs, the best repose for her perhaps somewhat overstrained mental powers. At all events, it is a convincing proof that genius is no preventive to the due execution of the duties of domestic life; and it has well been observed of those who neglect them, that "it is rather a sign of their having too little than too much ability." It has been said, and with truth, that for one lady who neglects her household affairs from her love of literature, some hundreds may be found, who do so from a fondness for pleasure and gaiety. She who is fond of reading can find society in her books, and is satisfied with her own fireside; whilst those who have not this resource are driven to seek amusement in every house rather than their own.

Mrs. Radcliffe devoted much of her leisure time to the literature of the day, particularly poetry and novels. She was totally devoid of all literary jealousy, and she devoured the earlier Scotch novels with all the avidity of youth. To music she was passionately attached, and she sang with great sweetness. She frequently visited the opera, and after her return home would sit up till a late hour singing the airs she had heard there, which her quickness of ear had enabled her to catch. She was peculiarly affected by sacred music, particularly that of Handel.

Mrs. Radcliffe's greatest failing, if failing it can be termed, appears to have been the morbid delicacy of feeling which is acquired and nourished by living in great retirement, and which generally induces individuals, particularly those of a nervous temperament, to attach an undue importance to trifles, for which, had

they lived more in the world, they would not have cared. She seems to have forgotten that the pleasures of celebrity and of private insignificance are incompatible, and that the high reputation she had acquired by her writings was the moving cause why she should be the subject of literary gossip, among the anecdote-mongers of her day. She was deeply affected by a passage in Miss Seward's Letters, in which that lady says, she hears the Plays on the Passions (afterwards acknowledged by Miss Joanna Baillie) had been attributed to, and owned by, Mrs. Radcliffe.

Had Mrs. Radcliffe mixed more in that literary society, which would have hailed her with pleasure, and of which she would have been a great ornament, she would probably have merely smiled at these gossip reports, instead of worrying herself with the supposition that the world could ever have attributed to her such a literary imposition. She might also have divested herself of the idea, probably acquired from the early impressions of education, and of the somewhat primitive and old-fashioned society with which she associated when young, of the incompatibility of the gentlewoman and the authoress.

But if Mrs. Radcliffe abstained from gracing society with her presence, she seems to have enjoyed with peculiar relish the elegant pleasures of retirement;—and no one has a right to complain of her preferring "to hold high converse with the mighty dead," by her own fireside, to the exhibition of herself in London parties, as was the custom with many of her literary compeers; and if she found more pleasure in a solitary ramble under the Tudor beeches and Plantagenet oaks of

Windsor, than in an archery party, or in a gay pic-nic to Richmond, there are many who will agree in thinking hers was the preferable choice. Her biographer well observes, "If, in her retirement, she was sometimes affected by circumstances which would have passed unheeded amidst the bustle of the world, she was more than repaid by the enjoyments which were fostered in the shade; and perhaps few distinguished authors have passed a life so blameless and so happy."

Mrs. Radcliffe is thus described by a contemporary who spent an evening with her: "Her conversation was delightful. She sang with a voice melodious and mellow, but tremulous. Her countenance indicated melancholy. She had, doubtless, in her youth been beautiful. She was a great admirer of Schiller's Robbers. Her favourite tragedy was Macbeth. Her favourite painters were Salvator, Claude, and Gaspar Poussin. Her favourite poets after Shakspeare, were Tasso, Milton, Spenser. She had not only an elegant taste, but a comprehensive understanding."

Mrs. Radcliffe was educated in the principles of the Church of England; and through life, unless prevented by indisposition, regularly attended divine service. Her piety, though cheerful, was deep and sincere. Like her gifted cotemporary, Charlotte Smith, religion was apparently, by her, deemed too sacred a subject to be casually introduced in the pages of a work of mere amusement.

During the last twelve years of her life, Mrs. Radcliffe suffered, at intervals, from a spasmodic asthma, which greatly affected her health, and called for the unwearied attention of her affectionate husband. In the

autumn of 1821, they visited Ramsgate on her account, and she derived sufficient benefit from the sea air to recur to her old practice of noting down her impressions, which she did with a vividness of description which evinces that age had not dimmed her faculties. This was, however, the last time the Enchantress of Udolpho ever exercised her pen.

The following severe winter greatly affected her health, and in March, 1822, she was taken ill with inflammation of the lungs. She survived this attack, and even regained a considerable share of health; but in the following winter. from exposure to cold, the disorder returned, and ultimately proved fatal. Her brain was attacked by inflammation a few days previous to her death, and the account of a shocking murder she had read a few days before, weighing deeply on her mind, produced a temporary delirium. From this, however, she recovered, and continued sensible to the last; but she was reduced to such a state of weakness, that on the morning of the 7th of February, 1823, she tranquilly expired, in the fifty-ninth year of her age. Her remains were interred in a vault in the Chapel of Ease, at Bayswater, belonging to St. George's, Hanover-square.

Mrs. Radcliffe was decidedly the originator of her own peculiar style of writing, which may, perhaps, be considered as holding a sort of middle class, between the romance of chivalry and the modern tale of terror, though equally remote from both. She unites the beautiful and the touching in her descriptions, with the mysterious and the awful, and there are some who think she excels in the former even more than the latter. It is well said of her, that "she only, of all writers of ro-

mance who have awed and affected the public mind by hints of things unseen, has employed enchantments purely innocent; has forborne to raise one questionable throb, or call forth a momentary blush. This is the great test not only of moral feeling, but of intellectual power, and in this will be found her highest praise."

Mrs. Radcliffe's peculiar talent appears to have been for descriptive and interesting narrative, rather than for the delineation of feelings or character. Her heroines generally resemble each other; they are all "lovely, and gentle, and distressed;" they have, it has been said, all "blue eyes and auburn hair—the form of each has the airy lightness of a nymph," and they are all decorous, proper-behaved damsels, in whose adventures we are interested rather than in their characters.

In conclusion, with reference to Mrs. Ratcliffe's literary performances, we may adduce the opinion of Sir Walter Scott, who observes, with his usual benevolence and kindness of heart—

"Perhaps the perusal of such works may, without injustice, be compared to the use of opiates, baneful when habitually and constantly resorted to, but of most blessed power in those moments of pain and of languor when the whole head is sore, and the whole heart is sick."

LIST OF WORKS.

The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne, 1789.

The Sicilian Romance, 1790.

The Romance of the Forest, 1791.

The Mysteries of Udolpho, 1794.

A Journey through Holland and the Western Provinces of Germany, &c., 1795.

The Italian, (a Romance,) 1797.

Gaston de Blondeville, a Romance. St. Albans Abbey, and other Poems. (Posthumous.) 4 vols.

JANE AUSTEN.

JANE A_____ ___ born on the 16th of December, 1775, at Steventon, in the county of Hants, of which parish her father was rector. Her mother was Miss Leigh, whose paternal grandmother was sister of the first Duke of Chandos.

Mr. Austen resided at his parish for upwards of forty years, in the conscientious and unassisted discharge of his ministerial duties, until he was turned of seventy; after which he retired with his wife, his daughter Jane, and her sister, to Bath, where the remainder of his life, a period of about four years, was passed. He was not only a profound scholar, but was also possessed of a most exquisite taste in every species of literature; so that it is not surprising that his daughter should have inherited from him the literary tastes and talents she cultivated with so much advantage.

Miss Austen's reading was very extensive in history and belles lettres, and it would be difficult to say at what age she was not intimately and critically acquainted with the best essays and novels in the English language. Johnson in prose, Cowper in verse, were

her favourites. Richardson's power of creating and preserving the consistency of his characters, as particularly exemplified in "Sir Charles Grandison," gratified the natural discrimination of her mind, whilst his prolixity was so little to her taste, that it was tolerated only in consideration of his more agreeable qualifications. To Fielding she was not so partial, possibly the sins against good taste, which were not so universally discountenanced in his day as in ours, in which this celebrated writer too frequently indulges, rendered her incapable of fully appreciating the wit, the humour, and the pathos, which, despite of all his coarseness, cause the best of his works to be considered by his admirers as among the finest fictions ever written. At an early age she was enamoured with "Gilpin on the Picturesque," and she seldom changed her opinion either of books or men.

Notwithstanding the high cast of Miss Austen's mental abilities, she likewise excelled in many of the minor accomplishments of her sex. She evinced considerable talent in the exercise of her pencil, particularly in landscape. She was fond of, and excelled in dancing, and though she thought but little of her own musical attainments, they were such as a few years ago would not have been heard without applause.

Sir Egerton Brydges, with whom she was acquainted, describes her as "fair and handsome, slight and elegant, with cheeks a little too full. In stature she was of an elegant middle height; her features were good, her complexion delicate, and the expression of her countenance bespoke the cheerfulness, sensibility, and benevolence of her disposition. Her voice was extremely sweet, and she read aloud with great taste and effect,

particularly her own works, which were never heard to so much advantage as from her own mouth."

Miss Austen must have attempted composition early in life; but though she was rapid and correct in her style, a distrust of her own judgment induced her to withhold her performances from the public, till time and frequent reperusals had satisfied her that the charm of recent composition was dissolved; and so much did she shrink from notoriety, that even the applause which occasionally gratified her feelings, could not induce her to affix her name to her publications. In her own family she talked of them freely, was thankful for praise and patient of criticism; but in public, like other women of excessive delicacy, she shrank from all allusion to the character of an authoress.

Though with many persons Miss Austen's works are deemed worthy of ranking with those of Madame D'Arblay and Miss Edgeworth, in her own estimation, with the diffidence of true genius, they took up a much more humble station.

"Northanger Abbey" was finished in the year 1803, and was then intended for immediate publication; but though disposed of to a bookseller, and even advertised, it did not make its appearance till after the lapse of thirteen years, when, of course, many things mentioned therein had become comparatively obsolete, great changes having taken place during that period, in places, manners, books, and opinions.

In this work the aim appears to be, in some degree, to ridicule the romances written in imitation of Mrs. Radcliffe's works, and then very fashionable style;—yet her hero, Henry Tilney, bears honourable testimony to the merits of that lady's performances. "The person,"

he observes, " be it gentleman or lady, who has not pleasure in a good novel, must be intolerably stupid. I have read all Mrs. Radcliffe's works, and most of them with great pleasure. ' The Mysteries of Udolpho,' when I had once begun it, I could not lay down again; I remember finishing it in two days—my hair standing on end the whole time."

In another part, Miss Austen enters a spirited protest against the censure frequently and indiscriminately bestowed upon novels, even by some of the writers of such productions.

" I will not adopt that ungenerous and impolitic custom so common with novel writers, of degrading by their contemptuous censure the very performances, to the number of which they are themselves adding—joining with their greatest enemies in bestowing the harshest epithets on such works, and scarcely ever permitting them to be read by their own heroine, who, if she accidentally take up a novel, is sure to turn over its insipid pages with disgust. Alas! if the heroine of one novel be not patronised by the heroine of another, from whom can she expect protection and regard? I cannot approve of it. Let us leave it to reviewers to abuse such effusions of fancy at their leisure, and over every new novel to talk in threadbare strains of the trash with which the press now groans. Let us not desert one another; we are an injured body. Although our productions have afforded more extensive and unaffected pleasure than those of any other literary corporation in the world, no species of composition has been so much decried. And while the abilities of the nine hundredth abridger of the History of England, or of the man who collects and publishes in a volume some dozen lines of

Milton, Pope, and Prior, with a paper from the Spectator, and a chapter from Sterne, are eulogised by a thousand pens,—there seems almost a general wish of decrying the capacity, and undervaluing the labour, of the novelist, and of slighting the performances that have only genius, wit, and taste to recommend them.

"'I am no novel reader—I seldom look into novels—Do not imagine that *I* read novels—It is really very well for a novel.' Such is the common cant. 'And what are you reading, Miss ——?' 'Oh! it is only a novel!' replies the young lady; while she lays down her book with affected indifference or momentary shame.

"It is only 'Cecilia,' or 'Camilla,' or 'Belinda;' or, in short, *only* some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world in the best chosen language. Now, had the same young lady been engaged with a volume of the Spectator, instead of such a work, how proudly would she have produced the book, and told its name; though the chances must be against her being occupied by any part of that voluminous publication, of which the matter or manner would not disgust a young person of taste; the substance of its papers so often consisting in the statement of improbable circumstances, unnatural characters, and topics of conversation which no longer concern any one living; and their language, too, frequently so coarse as to give no very favourable idea of the age that could endure it."

The character of the heroine in "Northanger Abbey," Catherine Morland, "open, candid, artless, guileless, with affections strong but simple, forming no preten-

sions, and knowing no disguise," will not suffer greatly even from a comparison with that of Miss Burney's interesting Evelina, and contrasts well with the factitious one of Isabella Thorpe, in the same work, and her swaggering brother John Thorpe; whilst the inanity of Mrs. Allen, the solemn pomposity of General Tylney, and the matter-of-fact Morland family, are so true to nature, that one might almost imagine the authoress had copied from existing individuals.

At the death of her father, Jane Austen removed from Bath, with her mother and sister, to Southampton, whence they afterwards (in 1809) went to and finally settled in the village of Chawton, near Selborne, in the same county, a neighbourhood rendered immortal by the Rev. Gilbert White's pleasant work, and from which place she sent into the world a succession of interesting novels, some of which had been composed many years previous to their publication.

It was, however, with extreme difficulty that she was prevailed upon by her friends to publish the first work of her's which made its appearance, and which was entitled, "Sense and Sensibility." Nay, so persuaded was she that its sale would not repay the expenses of its publication, that she actually made a reserve from her very moderate income, to meet the expected loss, and could scarcely believe what she termed "her great good fortune," when she found it produced a clear profit of about one hundred and fifty pounds.

And yet the merits of this work were not at first so well appreciated as afterwards, when her subsequent performances had more thoroughly established her reputation as a popular writer. Amongst her productions, her next publication, "Pride and Prejudice," is, with

many persons, the favourite. In this, so well has she sketched the character of the Bennet family, that we feel acquainted, as it were, with each individual of the group;—the careless and caustic father, and the silly and trifling mother; the amiable Jane, the animated and energetic Elizabeth, the pedantic Mary, Kitty with her cough, and the hoyden Lydia;—each stand forth from the canvass with the force of life, and we are quite at home with all the little details of their mènage.

With some, however, "Mansfield Park," her next production, ranks as highly as "Pride and Prejudice;" and the humble and unpretending Fanny Price, the heroine, is a refreshing contrast to Mary Crauford, the complete but agreeable woman of the world, and her vain and self-satisfied cousins the Misses Bertram.

The character of "Emma," who gives the title to her next work, is perhaps too manœuvring and too plotting to be perfectly amiable; but the story is well managed, and we feel almost as much surprised as the heroine herself, when the engagement of Jane Fairfax and Frank Churchill is declared.

In "Persuasion," the last of Jane Austen's productions, which was published in 1818, together with "Northanger Abbey," after her death, the description of the heroine, Anne Elliott, is so natural, that the suspicion must occur to the mind, that the authoress, therein, was giving a description of her own feelings under somewhat similar circumstances. Perhaps there is many a young woman of seven-and-twenty, who, like Anne Elliott, "having been forced into prudence in her youth, has learned romance as she grew older—the natural sequence of an unnatural beginning."

Miss Austen excels particularly in her descriptions

of every-day life and character. To those who look only for incident and stirring events in a novel, her productions may, perhaps, prove uninteresting; but the popularity they have at last so generally attained evinces that her merits are beginning to be properly appreciated. In the portraying of the solemn coxcomb, the "Mr. Collins," and the "Sir Walter Elliott of Kellynch Hall, in the county of Somerset," and in that of the self-satisfied personages, full of conceit and pretension, the "Mrs. Eltons" and the "John Thorpes," she is incomparable; as also in the half silly fool, the "Mrs. Bennet," and the "Mrs. Charles Musgrove," contented and happy when their wishes are gratified, but nervous and cross when no longer the first objects of attention.

She is also inimitable in her descriptions of the little local interests of a country neighbourhood, the petty rivalries and animosities which excite the angry passions, and disturb the equanimity of the inhabitants, and the mutual complaints and jealousies of families, who are, nevertheless, on what is called "excellent terms with each other."

Notwithstanding her apparently exhaustless power in the drawing of characters, and the life and spirit which she gives to each portrait, evidently drawn from nature, it is asserted by her friends, that, though often surmised to the contrary, Miss Austen never copied from individuals.

Too soon for the public, as well as for her family and friends, was Jane Austen taken from the world. At little more than forty years of age, when most writers only begin to be known to fame, she was attacked by a deep and incurable decline. Symptoms of this disease first began to show themselves in the beginning of the

year 1816, and at first they were deceitfully slow, but in 1817, they became more alarming, and for the benefit of superior and constant medical advice, it was found advisable that she should be removed to the neighbouring city of Winchester. She retained her faculties unimpaired to the last, and supported with resignation and cheerfulness, her long and lingering illness. In a letter written a few weeks before her death, she tells her correspondent,

"My attendant is encouraging, and talks of making me quite well. I live chiefly on the sofa, but am allowed to walk from one room to another. I have been out once in a sedan-chair, and am to repeat it, and be promoted to a wheel-chair, as the weather serves. On this subject I will only say further, that my dearest sister, my tender, watchful, indefatigable nurse, has not been made ill by her exertions. As to what I owe to her, and to the anxious affection of all my beloved family on this occasion, I can only cry over it, and pray to God to bless them more and more."

In touching upon a subject of domestic disappointment, she says, "But I am getting too near complaint. It has been the appointment of God, however secondary causes may have operated." Then with amiable facility she turns from complaint to cheerfulness. She thus continues,—"You will find Captain —— a very respectable, well-meaning man, without much manner, his wife and sister all goodhumour and obligingness, and I hope (since the fashion allows it) with rather longer petticoats than last year."

She made a point of receiving the sacrament before excessive bodily weakness might have rendered her unable to benefit from it. She continued to write as long

as she could hold a pen, and with a pencil when a pen became too laborious to use. The day preceding her death, she composed some stanzas replete with fancy and vigour, and her last voluntary speech conveyed her thanks to the medical gentleman who had attended her. To the final question asked of her, wishing to know her wants, her answer was, "I want nothing but death."*

Shortly afterwards, on the 18th of July, 1817, she expired in the arms of her affectionate sister, and she was interred on the 24th, in the cathedral church of Winchester, which, as her biographer observes, "in the whole catalogue of its mighty dead, does not contain the ashes of a brighter genius, or a sincerer Christian."

Great as were the intellectual powers of Jane Austen, she was equally endowed with every feminine grace and virtue. Her temper was placidity itself, and though the frailties, follies, and foibles of her acquaintances could not escape her keen observation, never did she comment on them in the spirit of unkindness; indeed, she always, without any affectation of candour, endeavoured to extenuate the faults of others, and where this was impossible, she found refuge in silence. Her manners were as good as her temper;—tranquil without reserve or stiffness; and communicative without self-sufficiency or conceit.

The characters of Miss Austen's works belong to middle life, and the scenes are generally laid in a country village or in the neighbourhood of a country town. She makes no attempts at high-life, and instead of the grandly-sounding and aristocratic titles with which those who know not how otherwise to interest, seek to

shed a factitious brilliancy over their pages, scarcely a noble family is ever introduced by her; "our cousins, the Dalrymples," is perhaps, a solitary instance of the mention of any great personages, and this is evidently only to display the folly and vanity of Sir Walter Elliott's character.

It is in delineating characters and society, probably similar to that in which she moved, and the interest of little circles like those in which she herself was placed, that Miss Austen is so particularly felicitous; and in thus drawing from nature, without attempting to describe scenes with which she was unacquainted, she has shown as much good sense in the selection of her topics, as exquisite skill in the execution.

Jane Austen was thoroughly religious and devout,—alike fearful of giving offence to the Deity, as incapable of feeling ill-will towards any human being. On serious subjects she was well-instructed, and by conviction, as well as by education, her opinions strictly coincided with those of the Established Church of England, in which she had been brought up.

Sir Walter Scott was a great admirer of Miss Austen's works. His biographer says, "Miss Austen's novels, especially 'Emma,' and 'Northanger Abbey,' were great favourites with Scott, and he often read chapters of them to his evening circle."

In his Diary, he himself, in allusion to a novel called "Granby," which he was reading, says: "March 28, 1826. It is one of the class that aspire to describe the actual current of society, whose colours are so evanescent that it is difficult to fix them on the canvass. It is well written, but overlaboured—too much attempt to put the reader exactly up to the thoughts and sen-

timents of the parties. The women do this better. Edgworth, Ferrier, Austen, have all given portraits of real society, far superior to anything, man, vain man, has produced of the like nature."

In another place he observes, "Miss Austen's novels have a great deal of nature in them; nature in ordinary and middle life, to be sure, but valuable from its strong resemblance and correct drawing."

In speaking of her "Pride and Prejudice," he says: "That young lady had a talent for describing the involvements and feelings, and characters of ordinary life, which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with. The big bow-wow strain I can do myself like any now going; but the exquisite touch, which renders commonplace things and characters interesting from the truth of the description and the sentiment, is denied to me. What a pity such a gifted creature should have died so young!"

And even at Malta, when, in December 1831, Sir Walter Scott was, as it were, already vibrating between life and death, Mrs. Davey has recorded, that during a drive with her to St. Antonio, "Among some other talk, in returning, he spoke with praise of Miss Ferrier as a novelist, and then with still higher praise of Miss Austen. Of the latter he said, "I find myself every now and then with one of her books in my hand. There's a finishing-off in some of her scenes that is really quite above everybody else."

Another critic, said to be Lord Jeffrey, in the Edinburgh Review, after a masterly comparison between the intellectual capabilities and powers of either sex, observes: "No *man*, we will venture to say, could have written the letters of Madame de Sevigné or the novels

of Miss Austen, or the Hymns and Early Lessons of Mrs. Barbauld, or the Conversations of Mrs. Marcet. These performances, too, are not only essentially and intensely feminine, but they are, in our judgment, decidedly more perfect than any masculine productions with which they can be brought into comparison. They accomplish more completely all the ends at which they aim, and are worked out with a gracefulness and felicity of execution which excludes the idea of failure, and entirely satisfies the expectations they may have raised."

Finally, it may be said, that though one is occasionally annoyed with the underbred personages of Miss Austen's novels, that annoyance is only such as we should feel if we were actually in their company; and whilst we fully enter into the feelings of those who had to suffer from them, perhaps there is scarcely a single scene, the omission of which would improve the interest of the work; and this is what can be said of the productions of but few other writers besides the subject of this memoir.

WORKS.

Sense and Sensibility.
Pride and Prejudice.
Mansfield Park.
Emma.
Northanger Abbey and Persuasion. (Posthumous,) 1818.

ELIZABETH SMITH.

---------- SMITH was born at Burnhall, in the county of Durham, December, 1776. From her infancy she evinced that application and love of reading which distinguished her through life; at the early age of three years, she would leave an elder brother and younger sister to play, whilst she seized on such books as her nursery afforded, and amused herself with their contents. At four years old, she could read extremely well, and already the utmost regularity was observable in all her actions. Whatever she did was well done, and with a degree of reflection far beyond her tender age.

In the beginning of 1782, the family went into Suffolk, at the earnest request of a blind relation there, when Mrs. Smith's attendance upon him engrossing much of her time and attention, at his request, a young lady scarcely sixteen, whose abilities, however, far exceeded her years, was engaged, at first as a sort of companion, but afterwards as governess to the children, for the eighteen months they remained in that part of the country.

On the death of this relation they again returned, in 1784, to Burnhall, where they remained till the June in the following year, when Mr. Smith and his family went to Piercefield, on the banks of the Wye. Mrs. Smith had for some time superintended wholly the education of her children; but in the spring of 1786, the former governess returned, and continued with them for three years longer, and by her they were instructed in French, and in the little Italian she herself understood. This was the only assistance Miss Smith ever received; her subsequent proficiency in languages having been entirely the result of her own study.

In the summer of 1782, the late excellent Mrs. Bowdler, with her youngest daughter, Mrs. Harriet Bowdler, spent a month at Piercefield, when, notwithstanding their disparity of age, (for Miss Smith was then but twelve years old,) a lively friendship appears to have been formed between her and Mrs. H. Bowdler, with whom she spent much of her time during the following three years, the two families living constantly together, either at Piercefield or at Bath, where Mrs. Bowdler resided.

Mrs. Smith always attributed her daughter's subsequent application to the study of the learned languages, to her having accidentally heard that Mrs. Bowdler had acquired some knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, in order to read the Holy Scriptures in the original. But, though this might be the apparently moving cause, Miss Smith's extraordinary abilities would in all probability have developed themselves under even less favourable circumstances; though their intimacy and friendship with Mrs. Bowdler and her daughter, could

not but have been productive of the greatest benefits to her.

She even at this early age astonished her friends with the facility with which she acquired information on every subject, excelling in everything she undertook. At this period of her life, music, drawing, dancing, and perspective, were her chief pursuits, and she excelled in all. She was well acquainted with the French and Italian languages, and had made some progress in geometry and other branches of the mathematics.

She was particularly partial to poetry, and possibly, had her attention been more directed that way, she might have written poems of distinguished merit. But the few girlish specimens that have been preserved, though evincing some signs of talent, are certainly not beyond mediocrity. Reading was still her favourite employment, and she pursued it with such unwearied attention, that her friends were often wont to draw her from her books, lest she should injure her health.

At the age of thirteen, Elizabeth became a sort of governess to her younger sisters, Mrs. Smith having parted with the only one she ever had, and from this period, though her time must necessarily have been much occupied, the progress she made in acquiring languages, both ancient and modern, was rapid and extraordinary, the more so, perhaps, as she was entirely self-taught.

Her intimacy with Miss Hunt, which began in May, 1792, when that lady accompanied Mrs. Bowdler to Piercefield, appears to have first directed her attention to German, to which she was ever extremely partial;

Spanish she already read with ease; and in the winter of 1793,—a very fine dictionary and grammar in the possession of her brother, turned her thoughts to oriental literature,—when she acquired some knowledge of Arabic and Persian.

In 1794, when she was spending some time with her friend, Mr. Claxton, she made use of the opportunity which his excellent library afforded her, to commence Latin and Greek. Hebrew she studied from Mrs. Bowdler's Bible, with the assistance of Parkhurst, and her admiration of Ossian induced her to acquire a little Erse.*

She appears to have been endowed with no small degree of antiquarian research, for at fifteen, whilst wandering among the beautiful scenery in the neighbourhood of Piercefield, she discovered some remains of a building in a wood, where she thought she could trace out round towers, a moat, &c.; and her lively imagination immediately converting this into a castle, she followed up the idea with avidity, raising a little antiquarian romance thereon, with better grounds than many of the speculations of antiquarians in general;—for, finding in Warrington's History of Wales, that Llewellyn-ap-Gryffydd's death took place at Builtt on the Wye, occasioned by his having been pierced with a spear whilst endeavouring to escape from his enemies, Dec. 10, 1281; she made out tolerably satisfactorily to herself, that her castle in the woods, apparently of Roman construction, was Builtt or Bullæum Silurum, and that the name of Piercefield had been given to that spot from the death of the prince. In corroboration of this supposition, she made numerous extracts from Smollett, Collier, Camden, &c., and composed a little

poem on the subject, embodying the chief particulars of the transaction, which she feigned to have been dug up at Piercefield.

At the commencement of the war in the year 1793, numerous banks in the west of England failed, and Mr. Smith's, unfortunately, was among the number. The following is Miss Smith's own account of this catastrophe, in a letter to her friend, Mrs. H. Bowdler.

"Piercefield, March 3, 1793.

"We were within an hour of setting off from hence, and intended to have seen you, my dearest friend, to-morrow; when we were prevented, and I may say it is the only time that I have ever rejoiced at being prevented, seeing you. Last night, after my mother wrote to you, we were informed by a friend that there was an execution against my father. At ten o'clock at night the under-sheriff, &c. came to take possession of the house. It was secured, so that they could not enter; but you may imagine the horror of our situation in that night of storms. Fortunately, the next day being Sunday, we had to watch only till twelve o'clock; and to-day we were preparing to go away at eight this evening, when we heard that my father's attorney was come from London, that the money was provided, and the execution stopped. There is to be a meeting of creditors to-morrow, who are to have an exact statement of all the concerns of the bank. My mother supported herself wonderfully last night, but to-day she was quite exhausted, till this news revived her a little. Mr. and Mrs. —— were in dreadful anxiety this morning, but I hope they too are a little comforted; in short, the prospect appears bright to what it did two hours ago,

and we shall all, I hope, bear whatever happens with fortitude.

"Above all, my beloved friend, I entreat you not to be uneasy, for I trust all will be well. My only apprehension has been for my mother, and I confess it has been hard work to appear cheerful, when I saw her agitated in the greatest degree, and knew that I could be in no way of the least use; but she showed great resolution, whenever it was necessary. My father now writes in better spirits, and I am happy to see her a little more at ease. My mother desires me to say a thousand kind things for her. The servants have behaved nobly, and she has had all the comforts that friends can give."

This terrible reverse of fortune, which, from all the comforts and elegancies of affluence, plunged the whole family suddenly and unexpectedly into comparative indigence, was supported by them with truly christian fortitude and resignation. Not a single murmur escaped them, and, indeed, their sympathies seem to have been far more called forth by the distress of the family alluded to in Miss Smith's letter, than for themselves. In 1791, when the bank was in a very flourishing state, that gentleman, a neighbour and friend of Mr. Smith's, had been induced to put his name into the firm, without advancing any capital or receiving any emolument, on condition of his son's being taken into the house as a clerk, and being admitted as a partner when of age. He was, of course, a fellow-sufferer of Mr. Smith, to the regret of all that knew him, but particularly of the Smith family.

Immediately on hearing of this misfortune, Mrs. H. Bowdler repaired to her friends at Piercefield, which

noble and beautiful place they, in a few days afterwards, quitted for ever; and with the loss of their fortune, they were interrupted in many of their most valuable and elegant pursuits. Miss Smith lost her harp and piano, on both of which instruments she performed extremely well; but a still greater privation was the library, by the use of which she had so well profited. The beautiful scenery about Piercefield had likewise afforded them a variety of subjects for their pencils,—and Elizabeth, who drew remarkably well, was also a complete mistress of perspective.

Though but just sixteen, at an age when many girls would have severely felt such a reverse, she appears to have supported it with the utmost equanimity, and even cheerfulness; instead of desponding and giving up her acquirements, as many under such circumstances might have done, she seems to have redoubled her diligence, and to have seized every opportunity of prosecuting her literary studies.

In the following year Mr. Smith went into the army, and for many years he accompanied his regiment, which was stationed in Ireland, whither his family subsequently followed him. In the first instance, however, the young ladies spent several months with their kind friends, the Bowdlers, in and near Bath, where they readily entered into a plan of employment proposed by Mrs. Bowdler, and pursued a regular course of history, both ancient and modern, varying their reading with the English and Italian poets, works on religion, &c.

Their friend, Miss Hunt, who was spending some time in the neighbourhood, now first turned Elizabeth's attention to the German language, to which she was ever afterwards extremely partial, and assisted her in

botanical and other pursuits, as well as different branches of mathematics.

After Mrs. Bowdler had retired to rest, they studied the stars, and read Bonnycastle's Astronomy; and an extraordinary instance of Miss Smith's powers of mind is recorded with reference to this work. One evening she had told Mrs. Bowdler she did not understand what is said in that work, page 91, of Kepler's celebrated calculation, by which he discovered that the squares of the periods of the planets are in proportion to the cubes of their distance. She wished to know how to make use of the rule, but her friend could not assist her. On the following morning, when Mrs. H. Bowdler came down to breakfast at nine o'clock, she found Elizabeth with a folio sheet of paper, nearly covered with figures, before her, and discovered she had risen as soon as it was light, and by means of Bonnycastle's Arithmetic, had learnt to extract the cube root, and had afterwards calculated the periods and distances of several planets, so as clearly to show the accuracy of Kepler's rule, and the method of employing it. She was then little more than sixteen years of age.

In one of her letters about this time, she mentions that her favourite study was algebra. She was also occupied in reading a German translation of the Iliad,—Klopstock's Messiah; Zimmerman's "Einsamkeit," with which she was extremely delighted, a work known to English readers as "Zimmerman on Solitude;" Haller, Kleist, &c.; also, several Spanish works,—Feyjoo's "Theatro Critico Universale," Mariana's "History of Spain," &c.

There seems to have been about this period some idea of the family going to Canada, which, however, was

subsequently abandoned. She says with reference to this:—

"It is entirely given up, much against my will, for I was delighted with the idea, and wished excessively to go, but I despair of ever seeing it now."

In October, 1794, Miss Smith accompanied her family to London, and in November she went to Shirley, the seat of her kind friends and relations, Mr. and Mrs. Claxton. Here she began to study classical literature with such assiduity, that in the space of the four months she spent there, and without any regular instruction, she was able to read Cæsar's Commentaries, Livy, Cicero, Virgil, &c. Mr. Claxton's library did not contain any translations of these works, which makes her attainment the more extraordinary.

She returned to town in February, 1795, and in the spring of the following year accompanied her mother to Ireland, where they spent three or four months, paying, in their way thither, a visit to the celebrated recluses of Llangollen Vale, Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby, with whom they were greatly delighted.

They spent some happy weeks at Kingston Lodge, the seat of the late venerable Earl of Kingston, father of the late and grandfather of the present Earl; with whose daughter, Lady Isabella King, Elizabeth subsequently corresponded. From thence they set off on horseback to Sligo, about twenty miles distance, during the last ten of which it rained heavily. On arriving at their barracks at Sligo, dripping wet, owing to the negligence of the quarter-master, there was not even a bed to rest on, and the whole furniture of their apartments consisted of a piece of a cart-wheel for a fender,

a bit of iron for a poker, a dirty deal table, and three wooden-bottomed chairs. It was the first time the ladies had joined the regiment, and the contrast was indeed great which this forlorn scene presented, to the comforts and luxuries of Piercefield, which they had so recently enjoyed.

Mrs. Smith, who was standing by the fire, meditating, was suddenly roused from her reverie by Elizabeth's exclaiming—"O what a blessing!"

"Blessing!" answered Mrs. Smith, "there seems none left."

"Indeed there is, my dear mother; for see, here is a little cupboard."

Mrs. Smith dried her tears, and endeavoured to learn fortitude from her daughter.

Elizabeth ever paid that strict attention to economy which the altered circumstances of her father rendered requisite. She dressed with elegant simplicity, but at the same time, with but little expense, and could make a gown or a cap with the same skill she displayed in solving a problem in Euclid, or explaining a difficult passage in Hebrew. Nothing she thought right to do, was ever neglected by her.

They soon after left Ireland for Bath, whither they returned in October, 1796, and where they found their friend Mrs. Bowdler extremely ill. Miss Smith was staying with her, when her death took place on the 10th of May, 1797, and by her attention and kindness cheered her last moments, and supported her daughter during the trying scene.

The following winter was spent by Miss Smith at Bath, and in the summer of 1797 she went with her mother to

Conway, and afterwards to Plashenty near Oswestry, apparently in search of a cheap place of residence, which at last ended in their settling on the Lakes in the north of England. Whilst at Conway, Elizabeth ascended Snowdon, a spirited and graphic description of which she sent to one of her friends, by whom it was handed to Mrs. De Luc, and by her read to Queen Charlotte, who spoke of it in terms of great approbation.

In the summer of 1779, Mrs. Smith and all her family removed to Ballitore in Ireland, where Captain Smith's regiment was still quartered, and during their residence in that hospitable country, they everywhere met with the most distinguished marks of kindness. Whilst there, Elizabeth's former partiality to Ossian induced her to collect all the traditional accounts in her power which related to the heroes of Morven and Erin, and amongst her fragments appears an imitation, which, however, had probably been written at an earlier period.

Notwithstanding the wandering life which from circumstances she was now obliged to lead, she still seized every opportunity to pursue her studies, and at Ballitore, where they spent nine months, having access to a curious collection of classical authors, and other works, she made extensive extracts. Among these were extracts from Epictetus, Hesiod, and the Sybilline Oracles in Latin; from Cicero, Terence, Grotius, &c.; and she continued the practice till her death; for after her decease there were found among her papers, —An Analysis of the Odyssey—A thousand words, written in Hebrew, Arabic, and Persic, to show the resemblance between these languages—A number of

Greek words, with their signification—A collection of Welsh words—of African—Mandingo, Foulah, Yangay—of Chinese, &c.—Explanation of the proper names in Scripture—of the stars, with their titles in Arabic, and other papers in that language—Extracts from Bartholinus, in the Icelandish language, &c.

With all this wonderful extent of knowledge she ever retained the utmost modesty and simplicity of character; for as she herself observes—"The more talents and good qualities we have received, the more humble we ought to be, because we have the less merit in doing right."

The following is the opinion of their friend, Thomas Wilkinson, of this amiable and excellent young woman:—

"Her acquirements must have been allowed to have been wonderful; but to me the most astonishing thing is, how she has done so much, for she never appeared to do anything, and every one who saw her would have been more apt to have supposed her indolent than industrious. But though her progress of improvement was silent as light, yet it was certain as time. In her knowledge she was as modest as in everything else; never presuming to be *wise* in a discovery or a judicious observation. Always simple, sweet, and innocent, in her demeanour, she never gave herself an air of consequence for genius, learning, or beauty, though she possessed them all. In company she kept back so much, that some would be in danger of forgetting she was there; but when called on to speak, she did it so much to the purpose, so pleasingly, and so unaffectedly, that one wished no one to speak but herself. Some might have supposed her of an absent cast, but nothing

was further from her character; for her replies were the readiest I ever knew, when information was wanted. Her countenance was serious, but she not unfrequently smiled, and it was the smile of complacency and peace."

In 1800, Mrs. Smith and her family left Ballitore, to reside at Patterdale, by the Lake of Ulswater, from whence they afterwards moved to Coniston, where a small farm had been purchased. The situation of their house appears to have been very beautiful, and in summer it was delightful; it was, however, far from commodious, and in winter must have been uncomfortable. They, however, appear easily to have reconciled themselves to it, and to have greatly enjoyed the beautiful scenery with which they were surrounded.

In May, 1802, Mrs. E. Hamilton, with her sister, Mrs. Blake, went to spend the summer near the Lakes, when they were introduced to the Smiths, by Miss Bowdler, and they seem mutually to have enjoyed the society of such congenial spirits. In speaking of Miss Smith, Mrs. E. Hamilton says, alluding to "a most kind and welcome visit from the young ladies at Bowness,"—"I never before saw so much of Miss Smith, and in the three days she spent with us, the admiration which I had always felt for her extraordinary talents, and as extraordinary virtues, was hourly augmented. She is, indeed, a most charming creature, and if one could only inoculate her with a little of the Scotch frankness, I think she would be one of the most perfect of human beings."

On another occasion she says,—"It was not on a first acquaintance that her extraordinary qualities were to be appreciated. She did not emit those brilliant

flashes which dazzle the imagination; and so superior were the native graces of her mind to the ornaments which embellished it, that acquirements, which in others would have been admired as astonishing, were in her sometimes almost unobserved. To those who had been accustomed to contemplate the possessor of genius or learning raised upon the pedestal of vanity, and extorting the homage of applause from all beholders, the simplicity to which all ostentatious display was abhorrent, would have appeared as a defect; and therefore it is not surprising that her merit should have been sometimes overlooked. But whoever compared it with a higher standard than that of the world, must have been sensible of its near approach to perfection, and while they bestowed on her character the admiration so justly due, they would be led to reflect with gratitude that the model on which all her virtues were formed, is within the reach of all who with equal sincerity endeavour to mould themselves to its likeness."

The scenery of the Lakes had many charms for Elizabeth. She drew correctly, and her enthusiastic admiration of the beauties of nature often carried her beyond the bounds which prudence would have imposed on her excursions. In the summer she frequently was out for twelve or fourteen hours, in which time she walked many miles. When she returned at night, she never seemed fatigued, but was apparently more cheerful than usual, though probably by these great exertions she was undermining her excellent constitution.

In speaking of the beauties of the Lake, Mrs. E. Hamilton says, "Across which my sister was conducted by the *Nymphs*, who in the days of paganism would

have been worshipped as beings of a superior order, so elegantly graceful do they appear, when with easy motion they guide their light boat over the waves. After having seen all this country, I consider Coniston as the most eligible spot they could possibly have fixed on."

Having discovered a method of clearing the lights with wax instead of oil or varnish, with the assistance of her sisters, Elizabeth accomplished a beautiful set of transparencies for her friend Mrs. H. Bowdler, the subjects of which were copied from the scenery in the neighbourhood of Patterdale and Coniston.

In the year 1803, she spent some time with Mrs. H. Bowdler, when she showed her friend her translation of the Book of Job, which has since been printed. It is a wonderful performance for a young woman of not more than twenty-six years of age, and has been spoken highly of by the learned. She had also translated some chapters in Genesis, several of the Psalms, parts of the Prophets, &c.

Some of these were shown to a gentleman well acquainted with the language, who observed that the writer had an extraordinary knowledge of Hebrew, though he thought him rather too free for a biblical translator, but he showed great acquaintance with the language, as well as a refined taste, and many of his conjectures were eminently happy. This opinion was given without any acquaintance with the writer, whom the critic little supposed to be a lovely and accomplished young woman.

She was only twenty years old when she translated the eleventh chapter of Genesis, which, differing considerably from that in the English Bible, Mrs. H.

Bowdler requested a friend to show it to the celebrated Mrs. E. Carter, who candidly confessed the idea was new to her, but she thought the words would bear the interpretation. Sir William Jones, it seems, had given the same interpretation with Miss Smith in his works, which at that time had not been published, so that she had not the benefit of his criticism.

In the year 1803, Miss Smith's attention was turned to the translation from the German of letters and memoirs relating to the poet Klopstock, and his first wife Margaret, in consequence of Mr. Sotheby, the elegant translator of Wieland's Oberon, expressing a wish that her uncommon talents should be employed in something which might interest the public. He would scarcely believe what Mrs. H. Bowdler told him of the facility with which she translated from the German, and taking down Gessner's works, the only German book at hand, and turning to one of the Idylls, he requested she would ask her to translate it for him. Miss Smith had never read the poem before, and had no dictionary, but on Mrs. H. Bowdler's telling her Mr. Sotheby highly commended it, and that she wished to understand it, on the following morning Elizabeth brought her a correct and spirited translation, with which Mr. Sotheby was extremely pleased.

The interest which had been awakened by the publication of some of Klopstock's Letters, in Mrs. Barbauld's Edition of Richardson's Correspondence, induced Mrs. H. Bowdler to believe that the public would be gratified with further and more authentic information respecting the amiable Meta; and as she was supplied by the kindness of the venerable Dr. Munssen of Altona, who had been the intimate friend of Klop-

stock, with many letters and other works of his, both in prose and poetry, these were transmitted by her, as soon as they were received, to Miss Smith, by whom they were translated into English, and subsequently returned to Mrs. H. Bowdler.

Miss Smith had long been an enthusiastic admirer of Klopstock's poetry, and the interest which she took in making his character known to the English public, appears to have been intense. Her memoirs of him were compiled from Dr. Munssen's papers, together with extracts from Klopstock, "Er und uber ihn," by Professor Cramer, and from a life of the poet, published in the Monthly Magazine.

In March, 1805, Mrs. H. Bowdler thus addressed her, with reference to the work with which she was then occupied:—

"My endeavours to obtain a clear account of the new edition of Klopstock's works have been unsuccessful, but I still hope that I shall very soon know whether it contains any thing new, or worth sending to you. In the mean time, if you are not tired, let me have everything written by Mrs. Klopstock."

Among these were some "Letters from the Dead to the Living," suggested to Mrs. Klopstock by her husband's extreme partiality for Mrs. Rowe's works, and which will probably be considered by impartial critics to be quite equal, if not superior, to that lady's celebrated composition.

But Miss Smith's labours were now to be interrupted by a severe but neglected cold, which she caught in the summer of 1805, and which, terminating in a rapid decline, was the eventual cause of her death. To a faith-

ful and affectionate servant, of the name of Turpin, who had lived in the family ever since she was six weeks old, did Elizabeth give the following account of the manner in which it was caught, and which should serve as a caution to all young persons, to whom the emphatic words in Warren's "Diary of a late Physician," may well be considered as worth remembering.

"Consider a slight cold to be in the nature of a chill, caught by a sudden contact with your graves; or, as occasioned by the damp finger of Death laid upon you, as it were to mark you for His, in passing to the more immediate object of his commission."

"One very hot evening in July, I took a book, and walked about two miles from home, when I seated myself on a stone beside the Lake. Being much engaged with a poem I was reading, I did not perceive that the sun was gone down, and was succeeded by a very heavy dew, till in a moment I felt struck on the chest as if with a sharp knife. I returned home, but said nothing of the pain. The next day being very hot, and every one busy in the hay-field, I thought I would take a rake, and work very hard, to produce perspiration, in the hope that it might remove the pain, but it did not."

From that time she was afflicted with a bad cough, and with occasional loss of voice, but could not be prevailed upon to take the proper remedies, or to abstain from her usual walks. These she persisted in, being sometimes better and sometimes worse, till October, when she proposed to accompany her mother to Bath, to make a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Claxton, in the hope that she might possibly beguile some of the painful hours

that gentleman constantly but patiently endured. Previous to the journey, she, however, became so rapidly worse, that a physician at Kendal was consulted as to the propriety of their continuing it. His directions were that they immediately proceed, as he considered a milder climate very essential. At Gloucester, her mother was alarmed to find she had lost the use of her limbs, and it was in this deplorable state that she reached her friend Mrs. Bowdler's house, on the 17th of October.

Under the care of Dr. Gibbes, and the friendly attentions of Mr. and Mrs. Claxton, to whose abode she afterwards removed, she in six weeks recovered sufficiently to be able to converse with pleasure, and to walk without difficulty,—when, being anxious to see her sister before her marriage, she accompanied her mother to Sunbury, where were her two sisters at the house of Sir John Legard. Here, Elizabeth spent the winter, Mrs. Smith having returned to attend a dying friend. On her rejoining her daughter on the 23rd of March, 1806, she was alarmed to see symptoms of confirmed decline in her countenance, and immediately consulted Dr. Baillie, who at once admitted it to be a very bad case.

In May they went to Matlock, the waters of which had been recommended to her, but these were only of transient benefit, and they soon after returned to Coniston, to which she evinced a decided partiality. She, however, gradually continued to decline, and on the 7th of August, this amiable and accomplished young woman breathed her last, to the inexpressible grief of her family and friends. She was interred at Hawks-

head in Cumberland, where, on a tablet of white marble erected to her memory, the following words are inscribed.

IN MEMORY OF
ELIZABETH,
ELDEST DAUGHTER OF GEORGE SMITH,
OF CONISTON, ESQ.
SHE DIED AUGUST 7, 1806—AGED 29.
SHE POSSESSED GREAT TALENTS,
EXALTED VIRTUES,
AND HUMBLE PIETY.

Miss Elizabeth Smith's character has been so well described by Hannah More, in "Cœlebs," that we shall, in conclusion, transcribe her words.

"Against learning, against talents of any kind, nothing can steady the head, unless you fortify the heart with real Christianity. In raising the moral edifice, we must sink deep in proportion as we build high. We must widen the foundation, if we extend the superstructure. Religion alone can counteract the aspirings of genius, can regulate the pride of talent. And let such women as are disposed to be vain of their comparatively petty attainments, look up with admiration to those contemporary shining examples, the venerable ELIZABETH CARTER, and the blooming ELIZABETH SMITH. I knew them both, and to know was to revere them. In them let our young ladies contemplate profound and various learning, chastised by true christian

humility. In them let them venerate acquirements which would have been distinguished at an university, meekly softened, and beautifully shaded, by the gentle exercise of every domestic virtue, the unaffected exercise of every feminine employment."

MRS. BRUNTON.

MARY BALFOUR, afterwards Mrs. Brunton, was born in the island of Burra, in Orkney, on the 1st of November, 1778. She was the only daughter of Col. Thomas Balfour, of Elvich, who was of a highly respectable family in the county of Orkney.

Mrs. Brunton's mother was Frances Ligonier, the only daughter of Colonel Ligonier of the 13th dragoons, and niece to Field-marshal the first Earl of Ligonier, to whose care she was consigned, on being left an orphan in early life. Her brother was the second Earl Ligonier.

Mrs. Balfour was a woman of great natural acuteness, and of very lively wit. Her conversation was original, and no doubt contributed to form her daughter's mind, to whom she imparted the various accomplishments which she herself had acquired, though these were perhaps more fitting to grace a court than to adorn the privacy of domestic life.

Colonel Balfour was a man of extraordinary talents and acquirements, but being necessarily often absent from his family, he had little leisure for the education of his daughter, which was conducted on no very fixed plan.

Like most other lively young persons left somewhat to their own guidance, her reading naturally turned a good deal to poetry and fiction, helping her to people that world of her own which the day-dreams of her youth had called up in her solitude.

From her mother she learnt the French and Italian languages, and was accustomed to translate much from them, to which her biographer appears to attribute her subsequent facility and correctness in composition; but they probably arose from living with clever and accomplished persons, and reading whatever fell in her way. Later in life she acquired, whilst under her mother's care, a little German, and she also became a considerable proficient in music. She was, for a short time, at a school in Edinburgh, and during her residence there, she received great kindness and attention from her father's sisters, of which she retained through life a most grateful recollection; but she was still very young when she returned home to undertake the charge of her father's household, which in Orkney, though likely to afford her a practical knowledge of economy, would necessarily engross too much of her time to enable her to devote herself to her own mental improvement.

When about nineteen years of age, her godmother, Viscountess Wentworth, who had been the wife of Mrs. Balfour's brother, Lord Ligonier, proposed that Mary should reside with her in London. But though this would probably have introduced her into a gay and fashionable sphere, she preferred the quiet and privacy of a Scotch parsonage, and became the wife of the Rev. Alexander Brunton.

After their marriage, they went to reside at Bolton, near Haddington, where the manse, prettily situated,

was washed by a stream with closely wooded banks, which contrasted strongly with the bare flats and magnificent sea views to which in Orkney she had heretofore been accustomed.

Being partial to the beauties of nature, in this retirement she taught herself to draw sufficiently well to sketch with facility and truth any object or scene that interested her.

She now began to read somewhat more on a settled plan, in which she was directed and assisted by her husband, who, whilst she devoted several hours in the forenoon to the acquiring of information by herself, would, in the evening, read aloud to her works on criticism and the Belles Lettres. The philosophy of the human mind was a favourite study, and Dr. Reid's works were much esteemed by her. She was also very partial to Dr. Robertson's style, and was wont to say she considered his account of the first voyage of Columbus one of the most finished and attractive narratives she had ever perused.

Among the religious works that she most valued, were Butler's "Analogy,"—Macknight's "Truth of the Gospel History,"—Paley's "Horæ Paulinæ,"—Newton's "Cardiphonia,"—Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying,"—Baxter's "Saints' Everlasting Rest," &c.

Being of the Scotch church, she was of course Calvinistic in her way of thinking; but she seems greatly to have admired the cathedral worship of the church of England, whenever she had an opportunity of attending it.

In addition to the domestic concerns of her household, which necessarily occupied great part of her time, she paid great attention to the education of two East Indian

wards of her husband, who became inmates of their family whilst they resided at Bolton, and in imparting to them the elements of religious instruction, she was naturally induced to examine more strictly into the grounds of her own belief; whilst both in her own mind and in those of her pupils, she sought to render faith an active principle, habitually influencing their life and conduct.

After six years of tranquil and peaceful retirement in East Lothian, Mrs. Brunton accompanied her husband to Edinburgh in the autumn of 1803, where he eventually became one of the preachers in the Tron church, doctor of divinity, and professor of oriental languages in the university. The change was somewhat regretted by her, as she tells her mother in a letter written about that time.

"I heartily regret the loss of my little quiet residence, which many nameless circumstances have endeared to me. But when I think that Mr. Brunton, without any object in view, might sink into indolence, live neglected, and die forgotten, I am in part reconciled to a removal, which will make my wants far more numerous, and my income (all things considered) more scanty. And though I shall never cease to regret Bolton,—though I must want many things which I here enjoy,—and what is worst of all, though I can no longer expect that Mr. Brunton will continue so much to be, as you truly call him, my companion and instructor,—I think I could endure anything rather than see him, to please me, consign himself with regret to solitude and inaction. He is pleased with a change that gives him something to hope for, (which here he never could have had,) and I

think I could reconcile myself to anything that would give him pleasure."

The narrow circle of their country residence being thus exchanged for the more enlarged and literary one of Edinburgh, Mrs. Brunton had now an opportunity of mingling with those whose talents and acquirements she had hitherto admired only at a distance, and by associating with persons of superior talent, she first began to feel her own ability. She had hitherto, in her confined sphere, merely appeared as an active and prudent young housekeeper, who submitted with good humour to the privations of a small income, and contrived by ingenuity and taste to combine elegance with utility in the management of her household. But she now found herself able to take her part in conversation, and was enabled to form and to express her own opinions; and the originality of her ideas, and the playfulness of her wit, rendered her a highly attractive and agreeable companion.

An intimacy she formed with a lady of the name of Inett, who resided in her immediate vicinity in Edinburgh, tended to develope her intellect and to establish her character; and when, after six years of confidential personal intercourse, Mrs. Inett left that city, the two friends kept up a constant correspondence, though Mrs. Brunton was by no means particularly partial to letter-writing, and seldom addressed any but the members of her own immediate family.

It was to amuse her leisure hours in the absence of her friend, that Mrs. Brunton first employed herself in writing "Self-Control," with no intention originally of its being seen by any eye but her own, far less that it

should appear before the public. But on one occasion, when she was urging her husband to undertake some literary work, she appealed to a friend who was present, to know whether he would not undertake to be the publisher. To this he willingly assented; but added, he would as willingly publish a book of her composition. This seemed to strike her as an event the probability of which had never before occurred to her, and she asked him repeatedly whether he was in earnest.

On this hint Mrs. Brunton wrote, or at all events, continued her writing, and the first volume of "Self-Control" was nearly completed before she informed her husband of her undertaking, who appears to have been considerably surprised, as well as pleased, with the composition. From that period she tasked herself to compose a certain portion every day, and in the evening read to Mr. Brunton what she had written in the course of the day; the manuscript was also afterwards submitted to him for revising, and he made in writing such remarks as occurred to him, leaving it to her to decide upon their adoption or otherwise.

Some of the alterations thus suggested she declined adopting, from the trouble she apprehended would arise in assimilating them to the rest of the narrative; for the story, she herself felt, was in many instances far too improbable for her ever to hope to make it appear natural, and she therefore was content with attending to the moral.

Of the origin and progress of her novel, she tells Miss Joanna Baillie, to whom she dedicated her performance, at first anonymously, though she afterwards acknowledged her name, on receiving through her publishers a letter of thanks—

"I have no intention of excusing the faults of my book to you; but, if you can have patience with so much egotism, I can account for them naturally enough. Till I began 'Self-Control,' I had never in my life written anything but a letter or a recipe, excepting a few hundreds of vile rhymes, from which I desisted by the time I had gained the wisdom of fifteen years; therefore I was so ignorant of the art on which I was entering, that I formed scarcely any plan for my tale. I merely intended to show the power of the religious principle in bestowing self-command; and to bear testimony against a maxim, as immoral as indelicate, that a reformed rake makes the best husband. For the rest, I was guided by the fancy of the hour, 'Me laissant aller doucement, selon la bonne foi naturelle.' The incidents were inserted as they happened to occur to my mind, and were joined in the best way I could to those that went before and after.

"The thing was not meant at first to see the light; nor would it ever have done so, if I had not thought the time it came to cost me too much to be spent in mere unprofitable amusement. I cannot help laughing when I recollect the glowing face and oppressed breathing with which I read the first chapter to my husband; making, in order to please him, a strong effort against my reluctance to the task. Indeed the book was far advanced before he ever saw it. Now, I can hear it censured by many with very little emotion, and praised by others with far less. Anything like approbation from you has elevated me to a convenient height above common praise or censure."

In September, 1810, it became necessary that her work should go to the press, if it were to appear during

the favourable part of the following season. At that time a considerable portion had still to be written, but Mrs. Brunton had sufficient confidence in herself to allow the printing to begin, as the necessity of finishing it within a certain period animated and roused her to exertion. Indeed, throughout the whole, whatever was written most rapidly was always the most eloquent, and it was only when she felt dissatisfied with her occupation, that she wrote with difficulty, and upon such occasions alone were there any interlineations and erasures in her manuscript. The work, the composition of which occupied less than two years, was printed from the first copy.

That Mrs. Brunton did not anticipate the success with which her book was met, is evident from her telling her friend Mrs. Inett, in August 1810, that "the 'love,' the 'admiration,' the 'esteem,' which you anticipate for your friend, she will never obtain unless in your imagination. My hopes of popular favour are low—very low indeed. Of a work like mine, the wise and the good will not be at the trouble to judge. Its faults are not such as will recommend it to the vulgar. It may become popular, for that is a mere lottery. If it do, be assured, my dear friend, its faults, of which it has many, will draw down the censure of those who are, or who think themselves, entitled to decide for their neighbours. Now, will not one bitter sarcasm on it, much more on its author, give you more real vexation than the praise of nine-tenths of novel readers will give you pleasure? I judge by myself; for, while I have little pleasure in praise, I am on many subjects keenly alive to censure. Many a person less generally vain than I, has felt all the touchy vanity of authorship.

"But I am positive that no part—no, not the smallest part—of my happiness can ever arise from the popularity of my book, further than as I think it may be useful. I would rather, as you well know, glide through the world unknown, than have (I will not call it *enjoy*) fame, however brilliant. To be pointed at—to be noticed and commented upon—to be suspected of literary airs—to be shunned, as literary women are, by the more unpretending of their own sex, and abhorred, as literary women are, by the more pretending of the other!—my dear, I would sooner exhibit as a rope-dancer—I would a great deal rather take up my abode by that lone hut on the hill, to which Mr. I. carried my husband on the day when the musquitoes were so victorious against him.

"All these things considered, pray transfer your sympathy to some other circumstances of my lot: rejoice with me that I have the finest peas and cauliflowers in Scotland; and moreover, the most beautiful apple-tree that can be seen."

This was written from what she terms "their chateau at St. Leonard's"—which in the preceding spring they seem to have hired or purchased; she says, "Though nothing has as yet the least tinge of green, it does not look very ill. It is as gay as ten thousand purple crocuses, and twice as many yellow ones, can make it. I shall grow impatient to take possession, and, if we can manage it, I believe we shall revert to our plan of going there early."

In October, 1810, she says, in a letter to Mrs. Inett, "I write to-day, not because I am in your debt, but purely to tell you that you must not expect to hear from me for three months to come! Ay, stare if you

please—but do not presume to challenge my award—for know, that I am one of the republic of letters. People are always great upon new dignities; and truly mine are new enough. This is the first day of them; this day the first page of fair print was presented to my eyes, and they are to be feasted with four sheets a week, for three or four months to come." * * * "Its failure! the very thought makes my flesh creep! I cannot express to you what a fellow-feeling I have now with the poor wretches whose works fall dead from the press! Well—well—by the end of February, or beginning of March, my rank in the scale of literary beings will be determined, by a sentence from which there is no appeal! A hundred things may happen ere then, which will make that sentence of no more avail to me, than the forms of the clouds that pass over me."

Her work was so well received, that it had not been published above a month before a second edition was required, and she now availed herself of a few of the suggestions of such of her friends as were aware that she was the writer of the book—and but of few; for in the advertisement prefixed, she states that "she is not sure of her right to make any material alteration upon a work of fiction. Perhaps they who have before honoured it with their notice, are entitled on a second perusal to find, along with the same qualities which conciliated their favour, the same faults which amused their critical sagacity."

Notwithstanding all the numerous faults of her work, of which she was herself modestly conscious, as she says, "I think the story is defective—it is disjointed—it wants unity—the incidents have little mutual connexion—it is patchwork—the shreds are pretty, and some-

times rich, but the joining is clumsily visible,"—it nevertheless became immediately popular, and quickly went through several editions.

She tells her friends, "Mr. Miller states the sale to be unexampled here. In five days two hundred and forty went out of the hands of the publishers. The remainder of the edition are sent to London. How it may do there remains to be seen. Here, it is much indebted for its success to the attention and friendship of the publishers."

In the spring of 1812, Mrs. Brunton paid her first visit to London, her previous non-acquaintance with which is very apparent in "Self-Control," where the heroine goes about alone, or with only a female companion, exactly as Mrs. Brunton might probably have gone about Edinburgh. Then, again, Madame Duval, for instance, in "Evelina," from her ignorance of English manners, might, without impropriety, take lodgings in Holborn; but Captain Montreville, an English officer, highly connected, could scarcely be supposed to be so uninformed of fashionable life as to place his only daughter in a second floor above a shop in Holborn.

It soon became known, notwithstanding her desire to preserve the secret, that Mrs. Brunton was the authoress of "Self-Control;" and with the knowledge came all the pains and penalties, as well as the pleasures, of authorship and of notoriety. To a lady writer the former generally preponderate considerably; and Mrs. Brunton felt the truth of this, when she says, "I must creep a little closer into my shell, and shrink, if possible, a little more from the public eye."

It has been said that there is scarcely an instance on record of an author writing only one book, where that

one book has been successful. Accordingly, Mrs. Brunton was no sooner established in her own house, than she turned her thoughts again to literary composition, and "Discipline," her second production, was commenced about the end of the year 1812. The intention of this novel is "to show the means through which, when self-control has been neglected, the mind must be trained by suffering, before it can hope for usefulness or for true enjoyment." Whilst employed in the composition of her former work, "Self-Control," which occupied her about, or rather less than, two years, it had been Mrs. Brunton's custom to devote herself wholly to it, whilst she was engaged in writing. But with "Discipline" she pursued another plan; she generally had some female work going on, during which she deliberately considered both the sentiments and style, and then laid aside her sewing or her netting, and committed her ideas to paper.

A few excursions into the Highlands had given Mrs. Brunton the idea that a sketch of the manners of the natives, something in the way in which Miss Edgeworth had delineated Irish habits and customs, might not prove unacceptable to the public; and for this purpose she made numerous inquiries concerning the scenery and character of the inhabitants. But she had scarcely completed that part of her work in which the Highlands and Highlanders are introduced, when Waverley made its appearance; and she at first, from feeling her own inferiority, resolved to cancel that portion of the story. She was, however, persuaded by Mr. Brunton to let it remain, and when the manuscript was completed it was sent to the press, in 1814.

Whilst employed in the composition of "Discipline,"

Mrs. Brunton seems frequently to have felt strongly that sort of listlessness and ennui which is so apt to steal over even a successful author, and which prevent his feeling at such times any pleasure in his performance. She says, "You give me a pretty broad hint, that my little interest in my present work proceeds from my own indolence. To this I can make an answer, which satisfies myself. I can, and often do, write, when I would much rather let it alone. But in these circumstances I never write well, nor can I by any exertion write better. The only fruit of my endeavours is strong disgust at the whole. An author can no more invent, who is not 'in the vein,' than a painter could draw a straight line, whose hand was in the tremor of an ague fit."

"Discipline," when published, met with far greater success than the writer had anticipated; for just at this period began what may be called the Scotch fever, and nothing but "Waverley" was talked of. In speaking of this work, Mrs. Brunton says, "It delights my very soul. Why should an epic or a tragedy be supposed to hold such an exalted place in composition, while a novel is almost a nick-name for a book? Does not a novel admit of as noble sentiments—as lively description—as natural character—as perfect unity of action—and a moral as irresistible as either of them? I protest, I think a fiction containing a just representation of human beings and of their actions—a connected, interesting, and probable story, conducting to a useful and impressive moral lesson—might be one of the greatest efforts of human genius. Let the admirable construction of fable in Tom Jones be employed to unfold characters like Miss Edgeworth's—let it lead to a moral like Richardson's—let it be told with the elegance of

Rousseau, and with the simplicity of Goldsmith—let it be all this, and Milton need not have been ashamed of the work."

In 1815, Dr. and Mrs. Brunton paid another visit to London, from whence they made excursions to Brighton, the Isle of Wight, Salisbury, Monmouthshire Wales, &c. At Llangollen they paid a visit to the celebrated recluses, Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby, and they returned to Scotland through Cumberland.

Mrs. Brunton's health having suffered from a low fever, she did not now feel so much disposed as heretofore for mental exertion; but she resolved at last to attempt a collection of short narratives, under the title of "Domestic Tales." The first of these was to be entitled "The Runaway," containing the history of a truant boy, whose hardships should teach him the value of home. With this narrative she projected combining an account of her native country of Orkney. But whilst she was applying to her brother, Captain Balfour, of the Royal Navy, and her sister-in-law Mrs. Balfour, for hints, and was endeavouring to renew her recollections thereof, she began the story of "Emmeline," which, though only a fragment, it is but doing it justice to say, far exceeds her preceding works in elegance of language and in pathos of sentiment. The intention of this little work was to show how little chance of happiness there is for the divorced wife who marries her seducer.

In 1817, Mrs. Brunton's spirits received a severe shock, from the death of a young friend who had been their travelling companion in 1815, and to whom she was most affectionately attached. This blow for some time disinclined her from all exertion.

The next effort she made was caused by a desire to learn the Gaelic language; and to this study she devoted a great part of her leisure for some months. For some time composition had ceased to be a voluntary employment, and a sort of presentiment that she should not survive her approaching confinement, might very naturally turn her thoughts to other subjects.

Under this impression, she herself made every preparation for her own death, with the same tranquillity as if she were merely about to leave home for a short period. The clothes in which she was to be interred were selected by herself; she chose and labelled some tokens of remembrance for her more intimate friends, and the intimations of her demise were sent round from a list in her own handwriting.

But these awful anticipations neither shook her fortitude nor disturbed her cheerfulness. They rather seemed to animate her the more, in the wish to promote the welfare of her fellow-creatures. "Life," said she, in one of the last letters she ever wrote, "is too short and uncertain to admit of our trifling with even the lesser opportunities of testifying good-will. The flower of the field must scatter its odours to-day,—to-morrow it will be gone."

Her anticipations were but too well founded. On the 7th of December she gave birth to a still-born son, and in a few days afterwards she was attacked with fever, which carried her off on the morning of Saturday, December 19th, 1818, when she had just completed her fortieth year.

In a sermon preached by Dr. Inglis, in the Tron church, after her interment, he thus spoke of Mrs. Brunton: "Great cause have we, no doubt, to mourn

over that dispensation of Providence which has removed from the sphere of our converse on earth one from whose converse we so invariably derived at once instruction and delight—whose piety was so genuine, that, while never ostentatiously displayed, it was as little in any case disguised—whose mental energies communicated such a character and effect to both her piety and her active beneficence, that they often served the purpose of an example to others, when such a purpose was not contemplated by her—whose mental energies, great as they were, yet derived their chief value from being stedfastly consecrated to the interests of truth and the cause of virtue—and whose native simplicity and openness of mind imparted to all her endowments a value which no talents can otherwise possess."

Although the novels of Mrs. Brunton cannot be considered as first-rate performances, they are interesting narratives, pleasingly told, and pervaded by a high tone of moral feeling. It may be doubted whether, in exemplifying the maxim that no modest woman should ever marry a dissipated character, Laura Montreville's resolution against so doing has not been made to degenerate into pertinacious obstinacy and a disobedience to her father's wishes. There are too many palpable improbabilities; and as Mrs. Brunton herself observes, "The story is clumsily put together." But though the taste of the public has been raised since she wrote, by the publication of the Waverley novels, the writer of "Self-Control," "Discipline," and "Emmeline," must nevertheless be considered to have procured for herself a very creditable station among the literary females of Great Britain.

Independently of her abilities, Mrs. Brunton appears

to have been a most amiable and respectable character in private life; and in Edinburgh, where literary merit seems ever properly appreciated, she appears to have been held in the esteem she merited.

WORKS.

Self-Control, 1811.
Discipline, 1814.
Emmeline; a posthumous publication.

MRS. HEMANS.

FELICIA DOROTHEA BROWNE, so well known in the poetical world as Mrs. Hemans, was born on the 25th of September, 1793, in Duke-street, Liverpool, in the house now occupied by Mr. Molineux, where the first five or six years of her infancy and childhood were passed.

Her father, Mr. Browne, was an eminent wine-merchant in that city, and a native of Ireland, of a branch of the Sligo family. He failed in his business, in common with many others engaged in similar speculations during that revolutionary period, and removed with his family into North Wales, where, for the following nine years, they resided at Gwrych, near Abergele, in Denbighshire, in a large old mansion, the greater part of which has since been taken down.

Some years afterwards, Mr. Browne again engaging in commerce, went out to Canada, where he eventually died.

Mrs. Browne, who was of mingled Italian and German descent, was a very superior and accomplished

woman, by whom her daughter Felicia was educated, and to whom she was most enthusiastically attached. Felicia Dorothea was the fifth of the seven children of her parents.

The bright and blooming Felicia was richly endowed with talent, beauty, and sensibility. The extraordinary facility with which she acquired information, was only surpassed by the powerful memory which retained what she had learned. Whole pages from her favourite authors she could repeat, after having once perused them; and such was the rapidity with which she read, that a bystander would imagine she was only carelessly turning over the leaves of a book, when, as if by intuition, she had taken in the sense as completely as others would do with the closest attention. She had a taste for drawing, though she had neither time nor opportunity to cultivate that charming art, beyond slightly sketching in pencil or Indian ink. On both the harp and piano she played with feeling and expression, and her voice was sweet, though she was soon obliged to discontinue singing, from a frequent recurrence of affections upon her chest.

As a child she was remarkably beautiful. Her complexion was extremely brilliant, her hair long, curling, and golden, which afterwards deepened into an auburn brown, but to the last remained silken, profuse, and wavy. Her sensitive temperament was evinced by her colour varying with every change of feeling; so much so, that a lady observed of her, in early life, that "she was not born to be happy, for her colour came and went too fast."

English grammar, French, and the rudiments of Latin, were the only things she was ever regularly

taught, but such was her progress in the last-mentioned language, that the gentleman who was her instructor used to lament that "she was not a man, to have borne away the highest honours at college." She soon, however, added Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese to her acquirements, and could also read German, though it was not till after years that she fully entered into the beauties of German literature, when it became a favourite study of hers.

The seclusion in which she was brought up, and the somewhat desultory nature of a home education, were probably highly favourable to the early developement of her poetical powers.

Fortunately, Felicia first carolled forth her poetic talents under the animating influence of the smiles of an affectionate and admiring circle. To her mother she confided and addressed her earliest inspirations, and by her the tastes and talents of her highly-gifted daughter were encouraged and appreciated.

Gwrych, an old, large, and solitary mansion, situated close to the sea-shore, and shut in by a picturesque chain of mountains, having the character of being haunted, appears to have had a considerable effect upon the highly imaginative temperament of the youthful poetess, who, in after years, was wont to describe "the strange creeping awe with which the solitude and stillness of the place inspired her,—and to tell how she once sallied forth, by moonlight, to encounter a goblin, which, under the shape of a fiery greyhound, kept watch at the end of the avenue."

The sea-shore was a favourite resort with her; she loved its loneliness and freedom; and whilst yet a child, it was with her a favourite freak, clandestinely to arise,

after her careful attendants had seen her safely consigned to her bed, and creeping down to the sea, to indulge in the luxury of moonlight and a stolen bath.

At about the age of eleven, and also in the following year, she passed the winter in London with her father and mother, after which she never again visited the metropolis, though she always retained a vivid recollection of several of the great works of art she was then taken to see. On one occasion, on entering a gallery of sculpture, she involuntarily exclaimed, "O hush! do not speak!" so intense was her gratification; and her mother used to take pleasure in describing the interest she excited, when visiting the Marquis of Stafford's collection, by her unsophisticated delight, and her familiarity with the mythological and classical subjects of many of the pictures.

She, however, soon ceased to care for sights and plays, and contrasting the confinement of a town life with the freedom of her mountain home, longed to rejoin her younger brother Claude, and her sister Harriet, in their favourite haunts and amusements,—"the nutting wood, the beloved apple tree, the old arbour with its swing, the post-office tree, in whose trunk a daily interchange of family letters was established; the pool where fairy ships were launched, (generally painted and decorated by herself,) and dearer still, the fresh, free ramble on the sea-shore, or the mountain expedition to the signal station, or the Roman encampment."

On one occasion, she expressed her pleasure at the thoughts of returning home, in a poetical epistle, which was among the first of her early published poems, commencing

" Happy soon we'll meet again,
Free from sorrow, care, and pain ;"

and which is an extraordinary production for a child of such tender years.

Her choicest recreation, even at six years old, was the reading of Shakspeare, and many hours did she hold communion with the fanciful creations of his brain, in a secret haunt of her own,—a seat among the branches of an old apple tree,—where, revelling in the treasures unfolded to her, she would become wholly absorbed in the imaginative world called up by the poet. To a large, dimly lighted, solitary room, looking upon the sea, she was also fond of repairing, and there she would declaim and recite passages from " Douglas," and other poems and plays.

The dreamy, visionary, and poetical sensations which probably are experienced by all young persons of talent, appear to have been felt by her in no ordinary degree from her earliest childhood. A strong tinge of romance pervaded her every thought, and her aspirations after the beautiful, were the most prominent signs of her poetic temperament.

In the year 1808, when but fourteen years of age, a collection of her poems was printed at Liverpool, with a dedication, by permission, to the Prince Regent, entitled " Blossoms of Spring," in the then fashionable quarto volume. But though there are some wonderful specimens of early poetic talent, neither the youth nor the sex of the writer saved her from the severe attack of an anonymous reviewer, which was so severely felt by the juvenile poetess, that she for some days kept her bed in consequence. Fortunately, however, for those who have taste and feeling, the youthful poetess, though

she quailed under the severity of the criticism, beamed subsequently forth with a strength and brilliancy that must have shamed her reviewer.

The "Early Blossoms," some of which were written when but nine years old, and which were inscribed, in an opening address, to Lady Kirkwall, dated Gwrych, October 1st, 1807, consist chiefly of birthday compliments, affectionate addresses to her friends, and little poems, similar to the first effusions of most young poets.

A second volume of poems, entitled "The Domestic Affections," made its appearance in 1812, still bearing the name of Felicia Browne, among which are some of a more heroic character—"The Bards to the Soldiers of Caractacus," "The Dying Gladiator." That entitled "The Ruin and its Flowers," is, in melody and plaintive pathos, far beyond the fugitive poetry of the day, and excels the generality of verses composed at eighteen. They were written on an excursion to the old fortress of Dyganwy, the remains of which are situated on a bold promontory near the entrance of the river Conway, which once echoed to the complaints of the captive Elphin, and resounded to the song of Taliesin, whilst its ivied vales, now fast mouldering into oblivion, formerly bore their part bravely in the defence of Wales.

Some of the happiest days of the young poetess were passed during occasional visits to some friends at Conway, where the charms of the scenery, combining all that is beautiful in wood, water, and ruin, were exactly calculated to kindle her enthusiasm; and the impression then made on her imagination by its lovely scenes were never effaced.

At times she would dream away whole hours in pensive contemplation amidst ther emains of this old Welsh edifice, standing in solitary grandeur, and flinging its broad shadow across the waves which wash its foundation; and Miss Joanna Baillie's play of Ethwald, which she first read among the ruins of Conway Castle, was ever pleasing lyassociated with the recollections of them; so also were the lively chronicles of the chivalrous Froissart, with which she first became acquainted whilst at Conway, and whose pages never lost their hold upon her memory, nor their place in her favour.

With that happy versatility, which appears to have been ever a leading characteristic of her mind, she would, however, readily abandon her poetical reveries, to enter playfully into the enjoyments of a mountain scramble, or a pic-nic water party.

In 1809, her family removed from Gwrych to Bronwylfa, near St. Asaphs in Flintshire, which has since been purchased by, and is now the property of, her eldest brother, Colonel Sir Henry Browne.

In the preceding year she had become acquainted with Captain Hemans, who was then on a visit in the neighbourhood, when a mutual liking took place. He was, however, on the point of embarking with his regiment for Spain; and the friends of both parties hoped that these mutual impressions might be as transitory as they were casual. But though three years elapsed before they again met, Captain Hemans, on his return from Spain, renewed the acquaintance, and their sentiments remaining unaltered, and the happiness of both seeming to depend upon an union, no farther opposition was made upon the score of worldly prudence, and in the summer of 1812, Felicia Dorothea Browne became

the wife of Captain Hemans, then of the Fourth, or King's own Regiment of Infantry.

The etherial nature of Mrs. Hemans must in fact have been but ill calculated to encounter the hardships and difficulties of this "worky-day world;" and indeed, from her own account, she ever seems to have had a distaste to what she termed "the dinner-ordering cares of life;" whilst Captain Hemans, whose health was impaired by the previous vicissitudes of a military life, including a Walcheren campaign, may possibly have required and exacted a more than ordinary attention to his own wants and wishes. Certain it is, however, that the union was not productive of happiness to either party.

On their marriage, however, Captain Hemans having been appointed adjutant to the Northamptonshire local militia, they first took up their abode at Daventry, where they resided for a twelvemonth, and where was born their eldest son, Arthur.

The corps to which Captain Hemans was attached, having been dissolved unexpectedly, the family returned to Wales in the following year, and became domiciled at Bronwylfa, and subsequently, till the death of her mother, Mrs. Hemans was never withdrawn from her maternal care, and here were born her four younger sons.

Mrs. Hemans's eagerness for knowledge continued to be intense, and of her industry, volumes, still existing, of extracts and transcriptions, are evidence. The mode of her studies was very desultory to outward appearance, as she loved to be surrounded by books of all sorts and languages, and on every variety of topic, turning from one to another. And this course, it is

said, "she pursued at all times—in season and out of season—by night and day—on her chair, her sofa, and bed—at home and abroad—invalid, convalescent, and in perfect health—in rambles, journeys, and visits—in company with her husband, and when her children were around her—at hours usually devoted to domestic claims, as well as in the solitude of the study and bower."

At this time, her inspirations were chiefly drawn from classical subjects, and the influence that Greece and Rome held over her mind is evinced in her "Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy," "Modern Greece," and the poems in the volume entitled "Tales and Historic Scenes." A number of translations published in 1818, demonstrate her familiarity with the various authors from whence they were extracted, namely, Camoens, Metastasio, Filicaja, Pastorini, Lope de Vega, Francisco Manuel, Della Casa, Cornelio Bentivoglio, Quevedo, Torquato and Bernardo Tasso, Gessner, Garcilazo de Vega, Chaulieu, Lorenzini, Petrarca, Pietro Bembo, &c.,—names embracing almost every language in Europe in which the muse has found a tongue. Her prize poem, entitled "The Meeting of Wallace and Bruce on the Banks of the Carron," appeared in Blackwood's Magazine for September, 1819. A patriotic individual having signified his intention of giving one thousand pounds towards the erection of a monument to Sir William Wallace, and a prize of fifty pounds for the best poem on the subject above alluded to, Mrs. Hemans was recommended to enter the lists as a competitor, and, to her own great surprise, her poem was selected as the best among the overwhelming number of those offered.

In the year 1818, Captain Hemans's health requiring the benefit of a warmer climate, he determined upon repairing to the Continent, and eventually fixed his residence at Rome. At this time a permanent separation was not contemplated by either party, and it was only a tacit and conventional arrangement, with a frequent interchange of correspondence relative to the education and the disposal of their children. But years rolled on, and from that time till the hour of her death, Captain and Mrs. Hemans never met again. She continued to reside with her mother at Bronwylfa, and had the five boys left under her care;—a sufficient proof that nothing more than incompatibility of pursuits and uncongeniality of temper were the moving causes of the separation.

Notwithstanding the peculiarity of her situation in consequence of this separation, her talents, her amiable qualities, and the increasing popularity of her writings, continued to secure to Mrs. Hemans the warm attachment of several distinguished friends, among whom were Bishop Luxmoore and Bishop Heber, with the latter of whom she became acquainted in 1820, and who was the first literary character with whom she ever familiarly associated. To him she submitted the commencement of a poem, entitled "Superstition and Revelation," which was, however, never completed by her, and at his suggestion, she was first led to offer her "Vespers of Palermo" to the stage. This play, completed in June, 1821, was, after many theatrical delays, acted at Covent Garden, in December, 1823, but proved a failure. It, however, led to a correspondence with the poet Milman, who kindly interested himself in its behalf; and it was subsequently acted in Edinburgh with

considerable success,—with an epilogue written by Sir Walter Scott.

"The Sceptic," the only didactic poem ever written by Mrs. Hemans, was published in 1820. Some years afterwards she received a visit from a gentleman, who thanked her earnestly for the benefit he had derived from its perusal, which he stated to have been greatly instrumental in drawing him back from the very verge of infidelity.

In June, 1821, Mrs. Hemans received the prize awarded by the Royal Society of Literature, for the best poem on the subject of "Dartmoor." On hearing of its success, she wrote to a friend, "What with surprise, bustle, and pleasure, I am really almost bewildered. I wish you had seen the children when the prize was announced to them yesterday. Arthur, you know, had so set his heart upon it, that he was quite troublesome with his constant inquiries upon the subject. He sprang up from his Latin exercise, and shouted, "Now, I am sure mamma is a better poet than Lord Byron." Their acclamations were really deafening, and George said that "the excess of his pleasure had really given him a headache."

It was about this time that the return of her sister from Germany, bringing with her an ample supply of German books from her eldest brother, then with the embassy at Venice, caused Mrs. Hemans to become an enthusiastic admirer of the literature of that country. She, in general, preferred the works of Schiller to those of Goethe, and to the "Stimmen der Völker in Lieder" of Herder, was she indebted for the first idea of her own "Lays of Many Lands," most of which first appeared, in 1823, in the New Monthly Magazine, then

edited by the poet Campbell. She had previously been a contributor to the Edinburgh Monthly Magazine, then conducted by the Rev. Robert Morehead, in which periodical appeared several of her poems, together with a series of papers on foreign literature, which were, with a few exceptions, the only prose compositions she ever gave to the world.

The Welsh Melodies, which were composed in the summer of 1822, and which first introduced Mrs. Hemens to the public as a song writer, soon after made their appearance.

In the summer of 1823, "The Siege of Valencia," together with "The Last Constantine, and other Poems," were published by Mr. Murray, who, the same year, gave her two hundred guineas for the copyright of her "Vespers of Palermo."

Several of her poems were written in 1822, in the laundry, a building detached from the dwelling-house at Bronwylfa, where, in consequence of certain alterations and additions that were going on, she was induced to take refuge from the obstreperous din of workmen, and from which locality, she was wont to say, it would be no wonder if *mangled* lines were to issue.

It was in the autumn of 1824, she began the poem entitled "The Forest Sanctuary," relating to the sufferings of a Spanish Protestant, in the time of Philip the Second, supposed to be narrated by the sufferer himself, who escapes to America. In point of finish and consecutiveness, this is considered by some to be her principal work, and she herself inclined to look upon it as her best. Though finished in 1825, it was not published till the following year, when it appeared in conjunction with "The Lays of Many Lands," and several miscel-

laneous poems, which had already appeared in many of the periodicals. She had already composed a tragedy, entitled, "De Chatillon, or the Crusaders," which was published after her death, from the original rough manuscript, the fair copy having been accidentally lost or mislaid.

In consequence of the second marriage of her eldest brother, in the spring of 1825, Mrs. Hemans, with her mother, her sister, and her four boys, the eldest being at school at Bangor, removed from Bronwylfa to Rhyllon, another house belonging to Colonel Browne, and situated on the opposite side of the river Clwyd, about a quarter of a mile from the former place.

Notwithstanding its unpromising aspect, Rhyllon soon became a favourite residence with Mrs. Hemans, and here she passed some of the happiest days of her life. Here were composed the "Records of Women," which were published in 1828; and a small woodland dingle was with her a favourite retreat, where she passed many hours of enjoyment with her books, her own sweet fancies, and her children sporting around her, and to which sequestered spot many allusions are made in her subsequent poems.

But the tranquil cheerfulness of this part of Mrs. Hemans's life was to be but of short continuance. Early in 1826, her eldest brother's happiness was clouded by severe affliction, and the impaired health of her mother threatened a fatal termination to her sufferings. Her death, which took place in 1827, was an irreparable loss to her afflicted daughter, who, being without her natural protector, clung with redoubled affection to the maternal society for shelter and security.

Could Mrs. Hemans have found consolation in fame,

she might have been comforted, as her reputation as a poetess was now spread far and wide, and the interest she excited in America was so great that a liberal offer of a certain income was made to her, if she could be induced to take up her residence in Boston, for the purpose of conducting a periodical work. Indeed, the admiration felt for her there, as elsewhere, was such that she was repeatedly sought out by travellers from that country, and the homage paid to her, and the expressions of the interest she excited, were occasionally quite whimsical.

Mrs. Hemans's literary friendships and correspondence were now continually on the increase, scarcely a day passing without bringing with it some new communication, interesting either from its originality or from the distinguished name of the writer. With truth and kindness Mrs. Grant of Laggan wrote to her, alluding to Shenstone's lonely existence—"not loved, not praised, not known,"—"How very different is your case! Praised by all that read you—loved by all that praise you—and known in some degree wherever our language is spoken."

Among others of her correspondents, who were admired by her, and by whom she was duly appreciated in return, were Miss Joanna Baillie, Miss Mitford, Mrs. Howitt, and Miss Jewsbury.

So great was the enthusiasm felt by the last-named lady for the writings of Mrs. Hemans, that, in the summer of 1828, she took a cottage in her neighbourhood, for the sake of her society, and, notwithstanding the apparent dissimilarity of character, a warm and lasting intimacy was formed between them. Many of Miss Jewsbury's "Lays of Leisure Hours," which were de-

dicated to Mrs. Hemans, were composed at this period, and her picture of "Egeria" in the "Three Histories," was avowedly taken from the same original. "Egeria was totally different from any other woman I had ever seen, either in Italy or England. She did not dazzle, she subdued me; other women might be more commanding, more versatile, more acute, but I never saw any one so exquisitely feminine. . . . . Her birth, her education, but, above all, the genius with which she was gifted, combined to inspire a passion for the ethereal, the tender, the imaginative, the heroic—in one word, the beautiful. It was in her a faculty divine, and yet of daily life—it touched all things, but, like a sun-beam, touched them with 'a golden finger.' Anything abstract or scientific was unintelligible and distasteful to her; her knowledge was extensive and various, but, true to the first principle of her nature, it was poetry that she sought in history, scenery, character, and religious belief—poetry that guided all her studies, governed all her thoughts, coloured all her imaginative conversation. Her nature was at once simple and profound; there was no room in her mind for philosophy, nor in her heart for ambition;—the one was filled by imagination, the other engrossed by tenderness. She had a passive temper, but decided tastes; any one might influence, but very few impressed her. Her strength and her weakness alike lay in her affections; these would sometimes make her weep, at others imbue her with courage; so that she was alternately 'a falcon-hearted dove,' and a 'reed broken with the wind.' Her voice was a sad, sweet melody, and her spirits reminded me of an old poet's description of the orange-tree, with its

'Golden lamps hid in a night of green;'

or of those Spanish gardens where the pomegranate grows beside the cypress. Her gladness was like a burst of sunlight; and if, in her depression, she resembled night, it was night bearing her stars. I might describe and describe for ever, but I should never succeed in portraying Egeria; she was a muse, a grace, a variable child, a dependent woman, the Italy of human beings."

Of a peculiarly poetical and imaginative temperament does Mrs. Hemans indeed appear to have been, taking delight in traditions and legends, and an interest in old associations, whilst she revelled in fairy tales, and every thing that partook of the supernatural. Her enjoyment of such fanciful creations was intense, and greatly was she pleased to find such predilections in the congenial minds of Bishop Heber and Sir Walter Scott. For statistics and abstract science she had no turn, and ever appeared to shrink from such topics.

With her intense perception of the sublime and beautiful, she had also a keen sense of the ludicrous, though she never indulged in sarcasm or personalities; and her conversation, with its perpetual flow of allusion and illustration, was as brilliant and playful, as her countenance was interesting and varying in its expression.

About this time the state of Mrs. Hemans's health became so alarming to her friends, that she was prevailed upon to resign herself to medical discipline; and among other precautionary measures, the adoption of a recumbent posture was prescribed to her. Unfortunately, at the period when she most required quiet,

care, and attention, the interesting home circle at Rhyllon was broken up by the appointment of her second brother to an official situation in Ireland, and the marriage of her sister, and the sending off her two eldest boys to join their father in Rome; and now, Mrs. Hemans, who had been, as she observes of herself, "all her life a creature of hearth and home," with impaired health and uncertain spirits, had to seek a residence for herself and her three youngest children.

Some friendships she had formed at Wavertree, and its vicinity to Liverpool, from which city it is two or three miles distant, inducing her to anticipate superior advantages there for the education of her boys, and the enjoyment of literary society herself, combined to influence her in selecting that spot for her new abode. But though she derived much pleasure from being near her friends, the Chorleys, the Parks of Wavertree Lodge, and Mrs. Lawrence of Wavertree Hall, she was, on the whole, disappointed in her expectations; and intense was the pain she experienced at quitting the land of her youth, the wild mountains and romantic scenery of Wales being ill exchanged for the comparatively flat and monotonous country about Liverpool. She also, after having long been the inmate of a large family circle, felt deeply the isolation of her present lot, and though necessarily now obliged to attend to her household duties, and to "the dinner-ordering cares of life," in her sister she had lost, as she was wont to observe, "the only real companion she ever had," and she was constantly "haunted," as she plaintively expressed herself, "by the melancholy words of St. Leon's guest, the unhappy old man with his immortal gifts,—alone, alone, alone!"

Her residence at Wavertree seems to have possessed but few recommendations to one of her imaginative temperament. The third of a cluster or row of buildings, close to a dusty road, too small for a house, too townified for a cottage, situated in a small court, gloomy and comfortless, its two small parlours and tiny back-rooms, scarcely larger than closets, it required no small ingenuity to render it even habitable; though, under the influence of feminine taste, together with her books and her flowers, it soon attained an appearance of elegance.

The inhabitants of Wavertree, for the greater part, staunch votaries of "sociable tea-parties," had few charms for Mrs. Hemans, who felt no delight in the card-table, and no pleasure in the "comfortable early party." She was, however, the object of much attention, and her house was besieged by morning callers, who overwhelmed her with compliments, and by album-mongers, anxious to possess something from the pen of the poetess, who yet could by no means enter into the fanciful ideas, or sympathise with the lofty conceptions, that distinguished her from the common run of mankind. In her letters she gives many laughable descriptions of the horror she felt at the interruptions she experienced from friendly visiters, who were wont to impose their tediousness upon her, and who, whilst they had no common topics to discuss, could nevertheless observe, "her room was sadly littered with books and papers—the strings of her harp were half broken, and she wore a veil on her head like no one else."

Nor was the society of Liverpool better suited to her feelings. It was too exclusively under the aristocracy of wealth, too much broken up by small distinctions of

sect and party, to be calculated for her peculiar tastes. She was, perhaps, too apt to laugh away argument with what might be termed "poetical wit;" dealing too much in fanciful allusion and brilliant remark, to be thoroughly understood. The less intelligent, the wealthy sons and daughters of commerce, rolling in affluence, "clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day," who took delight in the pomps and vanities of society, in formal dinner-parties, crowded rooms and ceremonious routs, were of course wholly unsuited to one of her intellectual tastes; and in return, they stood aloof from "a lady living on a limited income, in a small house." On the whole, Wavertree proved an unsatisfactory residence for her; though it may here be mentioned, that the society of the celebrated Mr. Roscoe, in which, when his health permitted, she was occasionally indulged, formed one of her greatest enjoyments, during her sojourn in the neighbourhood of Liverpool.

Soon after their arrival at Wavertree, as if to increase the troubles of housekeeping, the three boys fell ill with the hooping cough, shortly after which, Mrs. Hemans was herself seized with this tedious and harassing complaint, and very probably it proved highly detrimental to her already impaired health. Change of air being recommended, the whole party, in the spring of 1829, repaired for a short time to Seacombe, a small bathing place on the Cheshire side of the Mersey, where they speedily enjoyed, in recovered health and improved spirits, all the benefits they had anticipated.

During the many years that Mrs. Hemans resided with her mother, the anxieties and responsibilities of housekeeping had never fallen to her lot, and her time

and thoughts might be and were almost exclusively devoted to poetry and literature. But now domestic cares forced themselves upon her attention, and butchers' and grocers' bills intruded, as she observes, "in frightful array." In these household duties she felt but little interest, being as she playfully describes herself, "little better than a grown-up Rosamond, (Miss Edgeworth's naughty girl,) who constantly lie in bed till it is too late to get up early—break my needles (when I use any)—leave my keys among my necklaces—answer all my amusing letters first, and leave the others to their fate." Elsewhere she says, "I am now for the first time in my life holding the reins of government, independently managing a household myself, and I never liked anything less than *ce triste empire de moi-même.*"

The few fragments of her letters which have been published, just sufficient to make us wish for more, are singularly playful and easy, full of fanciful allusions, and elegant badinage, presenting a singular mixture of sweetness of temper and deep feeling, mingled with a laughable and laughing irritability at the intrusions and persecutions to which she was exposed, from those who were ambitious of a personal acquaintance with, and of possessing the autograph of, the poetess.

In one place she writes "They had an album with them—absolutely an album! You had scarcely left me to my fate—Oh, how you laughed the moment you were set free!—when the little woman with the inquisitorial eyes, informed me that the tall woman with the superior understanding—Heaven save the mark!—was *ambitious* of possessing my autograph, and out leaped 'the album;' a most evangelical and edifying book

it is truly; so I, out of pure spleen, mean to insert in it something as strongly savouring of the Pagan miscellany, as I *dare*. 'O the pleasure of fame'—I wish I were the little girl at the top of the apple tree again."

Notwithstanding the generally melancholy strain of her poems, there was in Mrs. Hemans's conversation and letters a buoyancy of spirits that contrasted strongly with the pathos of her poetry; though so keenly averse to what was coarse, as to cut out of her books anything of the kind, few surpassed her in varied badinage and sportive allusion. But it was only to the chosen few that she thus gave the rein to her spirits: in general society, she appeared quite a different being.

One of the features of the increased sensitiveness of her temperament at this time was an awakened enthusiasm for music, which now amounted with her to an absolute passion, and was, indeed, a source of as much pain as pleasure. During the winter and spring she applied herself with some diligence to its study, under the instruction of M. J. Zeugheer Herrmann, who, as she wrote, "comes to me twice every week, and I should like him as a master exceedingly, were it not that I am sure I give him the tooth-ache whenever I play a wrong note, and a sympathising pang immediately shoots through my own compassionate heart."

She frequently indulged herself in the composition of songs, some of which were set to music by her sister and other friends, and occasionally by herself. The ease with which she wrote them amounted almost to inspiration. The Peninsular Melodies, however, did not meet with great success, from the circumstance of many of the airs being wholly unsuited to the words.

It was in the summer of 1829, that, urged by repeated invitations, Mrs. Hemans, accompanied by her two sons, Charles and Henry, Claude being left with her friends at Wavertree Lodge, paid a visit to Scotland, where her name was highly popular.

She had for some time corresponded with Mr. Hamilton, the author of "Cyril Thornton," &c., who was then residing with his lady at Chiefswood, near Abbotsford, at both of which places she spent some time, and where, in Sir Walter Scott, she found a truly congenial mind. In bidding her farewell, when she left him, he said, "There are some whom we meet, and should like ever after to claim as kith and kin, and *you* are one of these." On one occasion he observed, "One would say you had too many accomplishments, Mrs. Hemans, were they not all made to give pleasure to those around you." On another, at Newark Tower, when two tourists made a precipitate retreat from them, he smilingly said, "Oh, Mrs. Hemans, they little know what two lions they are running away from."

At Edinburgh, she made some interesting and valuable acquaintances,—Mrs. Grant of Laggan, Captain Basil Hall, and Mr., now Lord Jeffrey, at whose house she dined, and whose conversation she states to have been "such *mental champagne* as she never tasted before, rich, full of imagery, playful, energetic." She was also introduced to Mr. Alison, and paid a visit to Mackenzie, the "Man of Feeling." Though then but the wreck of his former self, it carried her back, as she said, half a century, to hear anecdotes of Hume, Robertson, Gibbon, and other intellectual giants of old. She also spent some little time at Milburn Tower near Edinburgh, the seat of Sir Robert Liston, where her

bust was taken by Mr. Angus Fletcher, and in one of her letters, she playfully describes her dismay at beholding in his sculpture room, "six Mrs. Hemans, placed as if to greet her in every direction." She continues, "there is something absolutely frightful in this multiplication of one's self to infinity."

At Lady Wedderburn's, the sister of the late Viscountess Hampden, to whose house in Edinburgh they proceeded from Abbotsford, Mrs. Hemans and her children were received with the utmost warmth of welcome.

Soon after her return to her little dwelling at Wavertree, Mrs. Hemans had a visit from her friend, Miss Jewsbury, who was struck with her improved spirits, and gave the following pleasing sketch of their evening group. "When night comes, and the darling boys are arrived from school, and the candles are lighted, and the doors shut, our cabinet room would make a charming cabinet picture."

Mrs. Hemans was at this time engaged composing her "Songs of the Affections," some of which had previously made their appearance in Blackwood's Magazine. The principal poem, "A Spirit's Return," had been suggested to her, in a familiar conversation about ghosts, stories of which seem to have been a favourite amusement with her little coterie at Liverpool. It was one evening discussed, what would be the feelings of any one visited by a spirit, supposing such a visit possible. She spoke enthusiastically and eloquently on the subject, and from this conversation arose the poem in question, which, at that time, was preferred by herself to anything she had ever written. The "Songs of the

Affections" were published in the year 1830, and dedicated to Sir Robert Liston.

In the month of June in the same year, Mrs. Hemans put into execution her long-cherished plan of making a tour to the lakes of Westmoreland, whither she was accompanied by her youngest son Charles, her "little carlo dolce," as her friends were wont to term him; the two others, Henry and Claude, joining her subsequently when settled at Dove's Nest. She spent a fortnight with the poet Wordsworth, whom she describes as "a most benignant old man," and his residence, Rydal Mount, as "a lovely cottage-like building, almost hidden by a profusion of roses."

In conversing with her on Moore's theory of the unfitness of genius for domestic happiness, Wordsworth remarked, "It is not because they *possess* genius that they make unhappy homes, but because they do not possess genius *enough;* a higher order of mind would enable them to see and feel all the beauty of domestic ties." Of himself she says, "He has been singularly fortunate in long years of almost unlimited domestic peace and union."

So much pleased was she with the lakes, that, on leaving Rydal Mount, she was induced to hire Dove's Nest, beautifully situated on the banks of Windermere, which she thus describes: "The house was originally meant for a small villa, though it has long passed into the hands of farmers, and there is, in consequence, an air of neglect about the little demesne, which does not at all approach desolation, and yet gives it something of touching interest. You see everywhere traces of love and care beginning to be effaced—rose-trees spreading

into wildness—laurels darkening the windows with their luxuriant branches;—and I cannot help saying to myself, 'Perhaps some heart like my own in its feelings and sufferings has here sought refuge and found repose.' The ground is laid out in rather an antiquated style, which, now that nature is beginning to reclaim it from art, I do not at all dislike. There is a little grassy terrace immediately under the window, descending to a small court with a circular grass-plot, in which grows one tall white rose-tree. You cannot imagine how I delight in that fair, solitary, neglected-looking tree. I am writing to you from an old-fashioned alcove in the little garden, round which the sweetbriar and moss-rose-tree have completely run wild; and I look down from it upon lovely Windermere, which seems at this moment even like another sky, so truly is every summer cloud and tint of azure pictured in its transparent mirror."

Even in this sequestered spot her celebrity had preceded her, and tourists from America and visiting cards found their way to her. They brought credentials that she could not but acknowledge, and, as she playfully observes, "an album was levelled at her, like a pocket-pistol, before all was over."

In the middle of August, Mrs. Hemans was prevailed upon to make a second visit to Scotland, in compliance with the urgent entreaties of her friend Sir Robert Liston, and at Milburn Tower she formed an acquaintance with the family of the late J. C. Graves, Esq., of Dublin, who were Sir Robert Liston's guests at the same time with herself, which, ripening into friendship, induced her to take Dublin in her way to Wales from Scotland; and being much pleased with that city, where, with the advantages of education for her boys, she would

also be in the vicinity of her brother, Major Browne, she eventually resolved upon settling in Ireland.

She had at one time contemplated taking up her abode in Scotland, but Edinburgh was too cold for her now seriously impaired health, and she had long been troubled and annoyed with advice and prognostications of evil, resulting from what she termed her "incorrigible perverseness with regard to sage advice," adding, "whenever my death, from neglect of fur-cloaks and flannel-wrapping gowns, comforters, and hare-skins, does really take place, as the fulfilment of a thousand prophecies, I have the pleasure of thinking that it will be a matter of general satisfaction."

Late in the autumn, on her way back to Wavertree, she paid her last visit to Bronwylfa, and bade a second adieu to the

> "Green land of her childhood, her home, and her dead;"

and in the spring of 1831, she finally left Wavertree, which had ever been distasteful to her, possessing neither the pleasures of a town, nor the retirement of the country, to take up her abode in Ireland.

In the latter end of April she quitted England for ever, and after spending a few weeks in Dublin, proceeded to visit her brother, then residing at the Hermitage, near Kilkenny. "This," she wrote, "is a very pretty little spot, and I should be really sorry that my brother is to leave it in two or three months, were it not that the change will be one of great advantage to himself, as he is appointed to a trust of high responsibility. I have a blue mountain chain in sight of my window, and the voice of the river comes in to me delightfully. My health has been very unsettled, yet my friends are

surprised to see me *looking* so well. I think that on the whole the soft climate agrees with me; my greatest foe is 'the over-beating of the heart.' My life in Dublin was what might have been expected—one of constant excitement, and more 'broken into fragments' than ever."

Of this beating of the heart Mrs. Hemans had had very serious admonitions from her medical attendant, who told her that "nothing but great care and perfect quiet would prevent its assuming a dangerous character." "I told him," said she, "that he might as well prescribe for me the *powdered diamonds* which physicians of the olden time ordered for royal patients. I must own that this has somewhat deepened the melancholy impression under which I am going to Ireland, for I cannot but feel assured that *he is right.*"

But Mrs. Hemans was not fated to enjoy the quiet prescribed to her in Ireland, where, as everywhere else, she found herself the object of curiosity, attention, and remark, which, to one of her sensitive and retiring nature, was disagreeable and almost painful. When she went to see Woodstock, where formerly dwelt, and where then lay buried, her sister poetess, Mrs. Tighe, and where she wished to have been alone with nature and her thoughts, she found herself the object of quite a *reception.* "There was no help for it, though I never felt," she observes, "so much as if I wanted a *large leaf* to wrap me up and shelter me. Still one cannot but feel grateful for kindness, and much was shown me."

In Mrs. Tighe she had ever felt a deep interest, on account of a fancied similarity between their destinies, and her visit to her tomb was commemorated in some touching lines, published in the National Lyrics—

" I stood where the lip of song lay low,
Where the dust had gathered on beauty's brow,
Where stillness hung on the heart of love,
And a marble weeper kept watch above."

Early in the autumn of 1831, Mrs. Hemans took up her abode in Dublin, where she first resided in Upper Pembroke-street, the two elder boys of those under her care being at school, at the Rev. Dr. Gwynne's, of Castleknock, and the youngest having his education superintended by the Rev. R. P. Graves, of Trinity College. Though she entered but little into the gaiety and general society of Dublin, she still enjoyed a kindly intercourse with a few intimate friends, amongst whom may be mentioned the Graves family, and their relations Dr. and Mrs. Percival; Colonel D'Aquilar, the brother of Mrs. Lawrence of Wavertree Hall; Professor, now Sir William Hamilton; but above all, the Archbishop of Dublin and Mrs. Whately, together with their then inmate, Mr. Blanco White. Indeed, few individuals appear to have been blessed with more zealous and devoted friends than Mrs. Hemans, independent of her own immediate family, by whom she appears to have been almost idolized.

In the course of the autumn she paid a visit to the county of Wicklow, where, though her ill health prevented her enjoying its wild beauties so much as she otherwise might have done, she made excursions to the Devil's Glen, Lake Glendalough, and the Vale of the Seven Churches. In following the course of a little waterfall, she received from the guide, a female, the very flattering compliment of being " the most *courageousest* and lightest-footed lady she had ever conducted there."

On her return home, she became a sufferer from a very severe attack of heart palpitation, accompanied with

fainting fits and indescribable languor. She was shortly after attacked with a low fever, "during part of which time," she tells her friends, "when I could neither read nor listen to reading, I lay very meekly upon the sofa, reciting to myself almost all the poetry I had ever read. I composed two or three melodies also, but having no one here to catch the fugitives, they have taken flight irrecoverably. I have lately written what I consider one of my best pieces, 'A Poet's Dying Hymn.' It appeared in the last number of *Blackwood*."

With regard to her Melodies, she had for some time been sensible of a newly-awakened power in herself, of inventing airs, adapted to the words of her own lyrics, which proved a source of great delight to her, though she found some difficulty in the mechanical part of noting down, or what she called "caging," her musical fancies. In this task she was kindly assisted by Mr. Lodge, to whom she was also indebted for the symphonies and accompaniments of some of her songs. Latterly, however, she seldom played, excepting for the amusement of her friends, music making her so sorrowful as to be quite painful to her. Indeed, her altered health, and the presentiments which silently arose in her mind, appear to have greatly affected her spirits, her playful vivacity by degrees subsiding into a more subdued and serene frame of mind, whilst she took increased delight in sacred literature, and earnestly and diligently studied the Holy Scriptures.

The awful visitation of the cholera in Dublin in the summer of 1832, was a striking and impressive lesson to all; but though she felt the solemnity of "the presence of this viewless danger," she nevertheless did not take flight from the city, as was done by many families. She

could however, even now, still occasionally laugh at the ludicrous homage paid to her talents, "the gentlemen treating her as if she were the muse Calliope, with solemn reverence and constant allusions to poetry; and the ladies, as if they expected sparks of fire to proceed from her lips, as from those of the sea princess in Arabian fiction."

She still sought for relaxation from her more serious studies,—the works of Bishop Hall, Leighton, and Jeremy Taylor,—in the pages of her favourite Wordsworth, and in all such works as describe the appearances of nature, Gilpin's, White's "Selborne," Miss Mitford's, the Howitts', &c., which she was wont fancifully to term "her green books."

About this time she removed to 36, Stephen's Green, partly for the sake of having back rooms, as she suffered greatly from the noises in the street, where she had previously been living; for such was now the state of nervous suffering to which she was reduced, that it was, as she expressed herself, "as if she felt, and more particularly heard, everything with *unsheathed* nerves." "In my literary pursuits," she observes, "I fear I shall be obliged to look out for a regular amanuensis. I sometimes retain a piece of poetry several weeks in my memory from actual dread of writing it down."

Unfortunately, her maternal anxiety, and the enormous expenses attendant upon the education of, and the establishment of young men in the world, appear at this time to have stimulated her to exertions for which her strength was but little calculated; for though not absolutely compelled from her circumstances to make her poetical talent a source of profit, it probably was expedient, and in one of her latest letters to Mrs. Lawrence,

she laments the not having been able to devote herself to some great work—"It has ever been one of my regrets, that the constant necessity of providing sums of money to meet the exigencies of the boys' education, has obliged me to waste my time in what I consider mere desultory effusions,

> 'Pining myself away,
> As a wild bird, amidst the foliage, turns
> That which within him thrills, and beats, and burns,
> Into a fleeting lay.'

My wish ever was to concentrate all my mental energy in the production of some more noble and complete work, something of pure and holy excellence, (if there be not too much presumption in the thought,) which might permanently take its place as the work of a British poetess. I have always, hitherto, written as if in the breathing time of storms and billows."

She was gratified in seeing several of her sons provided for during her own short career upon earth. George Willoughby, lately returned from the military college at Sorèze, was now engaged in the Ordnance Survey in the north of Ireland, and with maternal pride she wrote, "His superiors make the best reports of him. He never loses an opportunity of writing to me the most affectionate letters, and takes a delight in my poetry, which, I trust, may be attended with better and higher results than those of *mere* delight."

An opening presenting itself for one of her sons in a mercantile pursuit, her son Claude sailed about this time for America, and, as she says, "she the less regretted his destination thitherward, as his inclinations had always decidedly pointed to that country." Her

latter days were also considerably cheered by her "dear Henry," then of an age to enter upon the active duties of life, receiving an appointment from Sir Robert Peel to a clerkship in the Admiralty, accompanied with a munificent donation, through the exertions of her friend Mrs. Lawrence; a circumstance as honourable to the heart of the patron, as it was gratifying to the maternal feelings of the mother, to find that she had herself been the cause of her son's early success in life.

The spring of 1833 found Mrs. Hemans established in No. 20, Dawson-street, Dublin, the last of her earthly homes; and here she devoted herself to the preparation for the press of her "Hymns for Childhood," and her "National Lyrics,"—which were brought out in the following year by Messrs. Curry, of Dublin. The former had been written some years before, and had indeed been previously printed at Boston, New England, in 1827, at the recommendation, and under the kind auspices of her friend and admirer, Professor Norton, to whom they had been sent for the use of his own children.

Shortly after the appearance of what she termed "The Fairy Volume of Hymns," her long-contemplated collection of "Scenes and Hymns of Life" was published, and inscribed to the poet Wordsworth. Many of these, though equally poetical, are of a more serious turn than some of her preceding poems. She also at this time contemplated a series of German studies, consisting of scenes and passages from some of the most celebrated German authors, introduced and connected by illustrative remarks. But she only lived to complete one of these papers, on Goethe's Tasso, which was published in the New Monthly Magazine for January, 1834, and

the language and sentiments of which are as poetical as if they had been clothed in verse.

In the preceding autumn, a happy meeting had taken place between Mrs. Hemans and her sister and brother-in-law, after a separation of five years. Though they found her "sadly worn and faded, and her health very fragile, yet she rallied wonderfully, and was again her former self, under the vivifying influence of their society." With all her own cordial kindness, she busied herself in forming various plans for the interest and amusement of her visitors; and many happy hours of delightful converse and old home communion were passed by her and her sister, in her two favourite resorts, the lawn of the once stately mansion of the Duke of Leinster, (now occupied by the Dublin Society,) and the spacious gardens of Stephen's Green, which, at certain periods of the day, are almost as retired as a private pleasure ground. There was something in the antique and foreign appearance of this fine old square, which made her prefer it to all the magnificence of modern architecture, so conspicuous in other parts of Dublin; and she would describe, with much animation, the striking effect she had often seen produced by the picturesque and quaint outlines of its irregular buildings, thrown into dark relief by the fiery back-ground of a sunset sky.

At this time a visit to the lakes of Westmoreland, and another happy re-union there, was projected for the following summer; but in the month of July, Mrs. Hemans was seized with an attack of fever, which so much reduced her strength, that she was reluctantly compelled to abandon her long-cherished scheme. A little excursion into Wicklow, which she made for change of

air, was unfortunately productive of the most disastrous effects, as she caught the scarlet fever, at an inn, and was in consequence reduced there to an alarming state of weakness.

On her recovery, she returned to Dublin, where, being recommended to be as much as possible in the open air, she spent the greater part of her time in the gardens of the Dublin Society, where she caught her last and fatal cold. One day, whilst absorbed in a book she was reading, as was her custom, she did not perceive the gradual closing in of an autumnal fog, till its penetrating chill had pervaded her whole frame, and a sort of shuddering thrill accompanied the presentiment that her days were numbered.

The same evening she was attacked with a fit of ague, and her already wasted form was soon reduced to an excessive state of debility, which only gave way to be followed by more alarming symptoms. Country air being recommended, the Archbishop and Mrs. Whately placed at her disposal their country-seat, Redesdale, a delightful retirement, about seven miles from Dublin, where she spent a few months, "receiving kindness truly *heart-warm*."

But though she derived some temporary benefit from this change, she was in March constrained to return to Dublin, to be near her medical attendants. She had at this time lost the use of her limbs, and had to be lifted in and out of the carriage by her brother, Major Browne, who, with her sister-in-law, now devoted himself to attendance upon her. They were soon joined by her sister and her son Willoughby, who staid till called away by even more imperative claims. Her son Charles had

the melancholy pleasure of attending his mother to the last.

Mrs. Hemans was now too ill to leave her room, and was only laid upon a couch during the day-time, occasionally suffering severely. But all was borne with resignation and patience, and when not able to bear even the fatigue of reading, she had recourse to her mental resources, and as she lay on her sofa, she would repeat to herself whole chapters of the Bible, and page after page of Milton and Wordsworth. Her thoughts reverted frequently to the days of her childhood—to the old house by the sea-shore—the mountain rambles—the haunts and the books which had formed the delight of her childhood. She was wont to say to those who expressed pity for her situation, that "she lived in a fair and happy world of her own, among gentle thoughts and pleasant images;" and in her intervals of pain she would observe, that "no poetry could express, nor imagination conceive, the visions of blessedness that flitted across her fancy, and made her waking hours more delightful than those even that were given to temporary repose." Indeed her sister observes, "At times her spirit would appear to be already half-etherialized, her mind would seem to be fraught with deep and holy and incommunicable thoughts, and she would entreat to be left perfectly alone, in stillness and darkness, 'to commune with her own heart,' and reflect on the mercies of her Saviour."

On the 15th of March, after receiving the holy sacrament, she became extremely ill, but a temporary improvement took place, and on the 26th of April, she dictated to her brother, (for she had for some time been constrained to employ an amanuensis,) her "Sabbath

Sonnet," the last strain of the sweet singer of the hearth, the home, and the affections.

On Saturday, the 26th of May, she sank into a peaceful slumber, which continued all day, and at nine o'clock in the evening her gentle spirit passed away without pain or struggle.

Her remains were deposited in a vault beneath St. Anne's Church, Dublin, almost close to the house where she died. A small tablet has been placed above the spot where she is laid, inscribed with her name, her age, and the date of her death, and with the following lines from a dirge of her own :

" Calm on the bosom of thy God,
Fair Spirit! rest thee now!
Ev'n while with us thy footsteps trod,
His seal was on thy brow.
Dust to the narrow home beneath!
Soul to its place on high!
They, that have seen thy look in death,
No more may fear to die."

A similar memorial has also been erected in the cathedral of St. Asaph, bearing the following inscription :

THIS TABLET,
PLACED HERE BY HER BROTHERS,
IS
IN MEMORY OF
FELICIA HEMANS,
WHOSE CHARACTER IS BEST POURTRAYED IN HER WRITINGS.
SHE DIED IN DUBLIN, MAY 16TH, 1835,
AGED 41.

WORKS.

Early Blossoms of Spring, 1808.
The Domestic Affections, 1812.
Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy.
Modern Greece.
Meeting of Wallace and Bruce, 1819.
Tales and Historic Scenes.
Vespers of Palermo, 1823.
The Sceptic, 1820.
Dartmoor, 1821.
Welsh Melodies, 1822.
Siege of Valencia, and the Last Constantine, 1823.
The Forest Sanctuary, 1826.
Records of Women, 1828.
Songs of the Affections, 1830.
National Lyrics, 1834.
Hymns for Childhood, 1834.
Scenes and Hymns of Life, 1834.

JANE TAYLOR.

JANE TAYLOR was born in London, September 23, 1783. Her father, Mr. Taylor, was an artist, and he resided at one time in the metropolis, but in the summer of 1786 he removed to Lavenham, in Suffolk,—fortunately for the subject of this memoir, as in infancy her health was so precarious that she was hardly expected to survive the period of childhood.

Mr. Taylor's house, which was situated in the outskirts of the town, was sufficiently spacious to afford apartments where the children might be left to their amusements without restraint. A pleasant garden adjoined, open towards the country, with a long and wide green walk, terminated at the upper end by an arbour in the old-fashioned style. Here, she and her sister, even at this very early period, were accustomed to pace up and down, hand in hand, lisping a simple couplet of their joint composition; and in an apartment assigned expressly to them, and furnished with their little apparatus of amusement, they learnt to depend upon themselves, and so agreeably filled up their time with their own avoca-

tions, as seldom to trouble their parents in their hours of leisure.

From her third or fourth year, to her tenth or twelfth, Jane Taylor appears to have possessed strong powers of imagination, which were evinced in the composition of tales and dramas; and many hours were spent in reverie, often indulged in when apparently actively employed in whipping a top—a favourite employment with her in her childish days. In fact, she formed to herself a fairy land, and her mind was perpetually teeming with imaginary interests. She was wont to say, "she had sometimes lived so much in a *castle*, as almost to forget she lived in a *house*." She was, however, a lively, entertaining child, the amusement and favourite of all who knew her, notwithstanding her being immersed in a world wholly of her own creation, which she enjoyed with as deep a feeling of reality as life itself would have afforded.

In consequence of a large and continually-increasing family, Mrs. Taylor was at times obliged to leave her daughter to the care of servants, who were gratified at having so much talent to display, which was exhibited in her reciting, preaching, narrating, &c., when quite a child, to an admiring audience, in a baker's shop, or at a neighbouring farmer's, which she did in a most spirited manner, notwithstanding a great natural timidity. But though no vanity was excited in the young exhibitor by the plaudits of her rustic auditors, her parents very properly put a stop to these nursery displays as soon as they became aware of them.

So early as six years old, Jane appears to have been in the habit of inventing and narrating *histories*, which were committed to paper in her eighth year, and no

sooner could she write at all, than she cherished a secret ambition of writing a *book*, although there was no one about her at all likely to inspire her with such an idea; and prefaces, title-pages, and introductions, were accordingly composed in due style.

Her productions were indeed confided only to her sister, for her scribbling propensity was not at all encouraged by her parents, who merely sought to educate their children for the ordinary routine of the duties of life. They were all brought up at home, and in the morning received lessons in his art from their father, whilst their afternoons and evenings were spent with their mother, whom the daughters assisted in every domestic avocation. Mrs. Taylor being troubled with deafness, was accustomed to read aloud to her family during mealtimes, which by constant use she could do with but little interruption; thus a certain mass of information was accumulated with but little trouble, and the intellects of the young people were cultivated by an early intercourse with the best authors.

In 1796, Mr. Taylor, who was a non-conformist, accepted the office of minister to a dissenting chapel at Colchester, to which town they removed in the above year. Although there was more society at Colchester than they had heretofore been accustomed to, it was not wholly in their power to select their associates, and the two sisters became intimate with the clever and amiable family of a physician, who soon after their arrival died, leaving his widow, four daughters, and a son. The father's death was an irreparable loss, for the young ladies, being infected with the fashion of the day, became tainted with Socinianism, which subsequently produced deistical opinions. Fortunately, the Misses Taylor re-

tained their religious impressions, which from the first appear to have been vivid; but the conflicts raised in the mind of Jane Taylor by the want of faith in her friends were at one time very distressing. In after life, Jane observed to a correspondent, that "their earlier friendships, though they must ever be remembered with interest and affection, were little adapted to promote their truest welfare;" though to them they were indebted for many benefits of a less valuable nature.

The six friends soon formed themselves into a society for the reading of original essays, and the promotion of intellectual improvement, where Jane, though among the youngest of the party, being then but fifteen years old, was wont to produce many didactic essays, which indicated originality of thought, soundness of sentiment, and sprightliness and simplicity of style.

When Jane was in her sixteenth year, Mr. Taylor delivered philosophical lectures, which he rendered interesting by introducing graphic illustrations of the subject on which he was discoursing. In the preparation of these he was assisted by his children, who thus became familiar with scientific topics. His daughter Jane entered with great zest into these pursuits, and though contrary to the imaginative turn of her mind, she ever retained a relish for matters of science, particularly for astronomy, which was one of her favourite studies.

Mr. Taylor, wishing to enable his children to secure an independence for themselves, instructed many of them in his own peculiar line of art, whilst practising which they remained under their paternal roof; but though in some styles of drawing Jane excelled, for engraving she seems to have had a thorough distaste, and she gladly relinquished the employment when other paths of exertion

were opened to her. In an early letter she says, "I am convinced nature never intended me for an artist. * * * No one can tell how my feelings are excruciated when I am referred to, or my opinion asked as an *artist*. I look at the girls in the milliners' shops with envy, because their business and their genius are on a level."

Early rising was the custom of the family, and the winter mornings and evenings were generally devoted to literary pursuits, whilst during the hours employed in engraving, one of Mr. Taylor's pupils generally read aloud, for the amusement and information of the rest.

In the summer, and indeed whenever the weather permitted, the brothers and sisters took long walks into the country, by which a taste for the beauties of nature was preserved and cherished, and these rambles tended to cement the tender regard they mutually entertained. Indeed, the Taylors appear to have been a most affectionate family, and their pleasures as well as their employments were ever pursued and enjoyed in the domesticity of their home circle.

At eighteen, Jane Taylor paid a visit in London, where she acquired several literary and religious friends, and a new era, both for the heart and the head, was commenced. She was stimulated to exertion by intercourse with superior minds, and her first attempts in verse proceeded rather from a wish to please, than from the love of display. She first wrote to gratify her friends, and after she felt conscious of the superior talents committed to her keeping, she composed from the higher motives of being useful in her generation.

The first production of hers which appeared in print was a contribution entitled "The Beggar Boy," to the Mirror Pocket-book in 1804, a periodical to which her

elder sister had contributed for some years. These verses generally pleased, and led to the idea that a volume of similar ones might gain public favour.

But though their parents could not but have been gratified with the rising reputation of their daughters, they were by no means anxious for them to become authors by profession. In fact, their first youthful attempts were never written till after a day of assiduous application to other pursuits. A little volume, entitled "Original Poems for Infant Minds," chiefly composed by "Ann and Jane," met with so much favour that it obtained extensive circulation, was translated into German, and quickly reprinted in America. This led to a second volume, which met with equal success, as also "Rhymes for the Nursery," the exclusive performance of the two sisters.

Jane appears first to have been led to compose under the idea of assisting her sister Ann, and her share was chiefly written at Lavenham, whither, during an alarm of a French invasion in 1803, Mr. Taylor sent part of his family, under the charge of his second daughter. The cares of the little ménage entirely devolved upon the youthful housekeeper, as well as the instruction of her younger sister, Jemima, and, as she continued to devote several hours to her supposed destined avocation of engraving, she had but little leisure for composition. Her winter evenings were the only time she had at her own disposal, and these were occupied in writing her share of these little works.

These volumes are peculiarly adapted to the infant mind, and from their easy and pleasing flow of versification, may be retained in the memory without much

trouble. In the composition of her verses for children, Jane Taylor's method was "to shut her eyes, and imagine the presence of some pretty little mortal, and then endeavour to catch, as it were, the very language it would use on the subject before her." She adds, "If in any instance I have succeeded, to this little imaginary being I should attribute my success. And I have failed so frequently, because so frequently I was compelled to say—'Now you may go, my dear; I shall finish the hymn by myself.'"

This was applied to a pleasing collection of hymns for the use of children, which was followed by another collection peculiarly adapted for the use of Sunday schools, and frequently introduced there. She also contributed to a volume of poems, entitled "The Associate Minstrels," now out of print; her share, however, has been reprinted in the second volume of her memoirs, published by her brother, Isaac Taylor.

The alarm of the invasion having subsided, Mr. Taylor again collected his family together in his house at Colchester. Here, Jane's comfort was greatly increased by the soliciting and obtaining permission to appropriate to exclusive use, a neglected and secluded attic, which however commanded a view both of the heavens and of the surrounding country. A few book-shelves, a table for her desk, and a couple of chairs, composed the furniture; and with this at once humble and exalted retreat she was so much delighted, as to call for the congratulation of her friends. She says, "For years I have been praying for such a luxury, and never before had wit enough to think of this convenient place. It will add so much to the comfort of my life, that I

can do nothing but congratulate myself on the happy thought, and I demand a large share of your poetical sympathy on the occasion."

In 1810, Mr. Taylor, having relinquished the charge of his chapel at Colchester, accepted an invitation from a dissenting congregation at Ongar to become their pastor, whither he went towards the close of the year. Whilst his removal was uncertain, his daughter Jane wished "for a retired spot, among plain good people whom she could love," and she was gratified in the Castle-house, occupied by her father for the first three years of his residence at Ongar. But though she had here the privilege of a room to herself, she did not long enjoy it; for about this time it was suggested by some friends, that the sisters should establish a school, and, accordingly, they spent some time in London, to perfect themselves in certain accomplishments.

This plan, however, was not much in accordance with their wishes, and obstacles arising, it was abandoned, and they again returned to the quiet and seclusion of their father's house.

Before this time, Jane had abandoned the practice of the arts as a profession, her time being now fully occupied with visits to her friends, and her various and increasing literary engagements.

The ill health of her brother Isaac having obliged him to go to the west of England, in the following winter he was accompanied thither by his two elder sisters. They took up their abode at Ilfracombe, in Devonshire, so close to the sea, that in stormy weather it was wont to break over the house in which they resided. As this was the first time she had ever visited a romantic country, Jane was highly delighted with the

grand and magnificent scenery of that coast, and greatly enjoyed rambling among the rocks in the neighbourhood. On their return to Ongar in the following summer, she first took an active part in a Sunday-school, established in the neighbourhood; but as, in the autumn, she accompanied her brother into Devonshire, it was but for a short time that she was thus occupied.

In December, 1813, the family circle was in some degree broken up, perhaps we should say enlarged, by the union of her sister Ann, hitherto her friend and companion in every literary pursuit, with Mr. Gilbert, an Independent minister. The marriage took place whilst Jane was at Ilfracombe. In an affectionate letter addressed to her sister on the occasion, she says, "From the early days of 'Moll and Bet,' (alluding to the plays of their infancy,) down to these last times, we have been more inseparable companions than sisters generally are, and our pursuits and interests have been the same. My thoughts of late have often wandered back to those distant years, and passed over the varied scenes which chequered our childhood and youth. There is scarcely a recollection, in all this long period, in which we are not mutually concerned, and equally interested."

This seems to have been her first great trial; for the separation from the friend and companion of one's early years must ever be so considered.

Jane, now Miss Taylor, was, in consequence of this marriage, thrown upon her own resources, and this winter she began to write her excellent and interesting tale, entitled "Display." It was commenced with a specific idea of the qualities intended to be portrayed, though with no decided plan for its execution. It was her custom, after breakfast, to take a solitary ramble

among the neighbouring rocks for half an hour, to seek for that pitch of excitement without which she seldom attempted to compose. After two or three hours devoted to her pen, she was then ready for a social walk, and seldom resumed the thread of her story again in the course of the day; for she now had commenced writing early of a morning, to which plan she generally adhered.

Her devotion to her brother's comfort was all this time most exemplary, and his restoration to health was, indeed, the business of her life for some years. She was ultimately repaid by the complete success of her efforts: and the time she spent in the west of England may, perhaps, be considered as the happiest part of her life. The brother and sister removed to Marazion in Mount's Bay, Cornwall, in the following year, where she completed and published her tale.

Although the scenes of "Display" are laid in less elevated society than that which generally occupies works of fiction, yet a thorough knowledge of the human heart is apparent throughout. The story itself is interesting, although it was originally intended but as a vehicle for moral and religious observations. It must be remembered that Miss Taylor was, by birth and education, a Dissenter, and some slight sectarian peculiarities are observable, which, however strongly animadverted upon at the time by the high church reviewers, are by no means offensively obtruded, and any over-strictness, or austerity of sentiment, must be attributed to the nature of her religious instruction. It is, indeed, a fiction that may be read over and over again, with redoubled interest, and it has met with the success it deserves.

After the completion of "Display," she commenced her "Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners," in which much knowledge of human nature is evinced. The composition of this volume nearly occupied the remainder of her stay at Marazion, with the exception of some contributions to the "Youth's Magazine," which she continued subsequently for some years.

As there was no chapel at Marazion of their own peculiar way of thinking, Mr. Taylor and his sister, whilst there, attended a Methodist meeting occasionally, and also the Established Church, to the latter of which she occasionally afterwards conformed.

Whilst in the west of England, Miss Taylor formed several valuable friendships, and at this time she began to devote herself to the personally visiting and attending to the wants of the poor.

In June, 1816, the brother and sister went into Yorkshire to visit Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert, and in August they returned to Ongar, after an absence of three years. Mr. Taylor had previously left the Castle-house, and removed to a farmhouse, a short distance from the town, with the situation of which Miss Taylor was highly delighted. Whilst here, she projected with her mother a work to be executed conjointly, in the form of a correspondence between a mother and her daughter at school. These letters were begun at Ongar and finished at Hastings, where the family spent the following winter, which was passed in the quiet seclusion of their own family circle, notwithstanding the gaiety with which they were surrounded, and for which, even at that early period, Hastings was conspicuous.

It was soon after her return home that she first felt the symptoms of an induration in the breast, which ulti-

mately proved fatal. It was probably under the feelings of apprehension, caused by this alarming disorder, that she experienced in the summer of 1817, what she seems to have considered a sort of "call." At all events, her mind, whether gradually or instantaneously, was induced to admit the saving truths of the Gospel, which, it would seem, she imagined she hitherto had not done. She, in consequence, made a public profession of faith, and joined the congregation at Ongar, under the care of her father.

The remainder of her life was chiefly devoted to acts of charity and to domestic duties. She sedulously attended the Sunday Schools, and instructed the children of her class in writing and arithmetic during the week. To a ladies' meeting, where they worked for the benefit of the poor, and which had originated with herself, she likewise gave her attendance when at home. She also did her utmost to promote the Bible Societies in the neighbourhood, and though never partial to the parade of office, she occasionally took her part in the committee.

Three or four years were thus spent at home in quiet retirement, only varied by occasional visits to her friends, which were kindly pressed on her, as being likely to promote her recovery. But her impaired health induced her to decline the continual excitement of change, which might contribute to divert her mind from objects of greater importance. She acknowledged, "that *home* was the place that suited her best."

In the autumn of 1820, she accompanied her father to Margate, and had the pleasure of seeing him recover from a most alarming illness. In the following spring she visited her sister, Mrs. Gilbert, and remained some

months at Hull, from whence she made excursions to York and Scarborough, where she seemed to enjoy the pleasures of general society, and where she received most kind and flattering attentions; and, indeed, she derived so much benefit from this excursion, as to excite hopes that as long as her mind was thus agreeably occupied, her complaint might remain in a quiescent state. It was under this impression, that invitations from her friends were repeatedly pressed upon her.

The house at Marden Ash, near Ongar, where Mr. Taylor had resided for eight years, being now let with the farm to which it belonged, he removed to a new abode in the town itself, which he purchased. This, though more commodious than the last, was much less suited to the tastes and habits of his daughter, and the depression on her spirits accelerated in some degree her disorder, which, however, was fortunately not attended with pain.

A cold she caught from being late upon the water, and exposed to a chilly rain in November, 1823, when in London, apparently hastened her end, for in the following April she died, after a few days of illness. She was interred in the burial-ground of the meeting-house at Ongar: a simple monument marks the spot where she lies.

In stature, Miss Taylor was somewhat below the middle size; her features were regular, and delicately formed, and her countenance was highly expressive. In manner she was arch and sprightly, and, though often rendered languid by indisposition, she was naturally active and diligent. Though well informed, and probably very superior to the generality of those with whom she was destined to associate, beyond the range of her

own talented family, her modest and retired disposition prevented her at all times from evincing any disposition to display. And this may be considered the more meritorious, as in the confined society of a country town, a woman of talent must meet with so few equals in ability, as to render her superiority very conspicuous.

WORKS.

Original Poems for Infant Minds. By Ann and Jane.

Rhymes for the Nursery.

Two Collections of Hymns.

Display, 1814.

Essays in Rhyme on Morals and Manners.

Correspondence between a Mother and Daughter, 1817.

ANNA MARIA PORTER.

THE father of Miss Anna Maria Porter was an officer in the British army, descended from an ancient and respectable family, boasting names distinguished alike for talent and learning. One branch was transplanted to Ireland by the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Charles Porter; whilst another of his ancestors, who had adhered to the cause of James the Second, followed that monarch to the continent, and subsequently, settling at Bruges, he became the founder of an opulent and influential house.

Their mother, Mrs. Porter, was also well connected, being allied with the old Anglo-Saxon Barons of Blenkinsopp and Hilton, the learned Adamsons of the north, and the celebrated John Tweddell, the Grecian traveller, whose remains have found an appropriate resting-place in the Temple of Theseus, at Athens.

On the death of her husband, who, as an officer and younger brother, left his family but very slenderly provided with this world's goods, Mrs. Porter, who had been born on the border-land of Scotland, retired to Edinburgh with her three youngest children, both for

the advantage of a strengthening air, and for the benefit of good education at a moderate expense. The eldest son was left in England at school, under the charge of his grandfather, who placed him there.

"We were almost infants when we arrived in Scotland," observes Miss Porter, "and commenced our regular little studies; but in those times of simplicity, it was not the pastors and masters only who sowed seeds of information in the young mind."

The names of William Wallace and Robert Bruce, and other Scotch heroes, soon became familiar to the youthful trio, for the maids in the nursery would lull the baby, Anna Maria, to sleep with songs of "Wallace Wight," whilst the serving-men in the hall would entertain the younger brother with tales of Bannockburn and Cambuskenneth, evening after evening, keeping his eager attention awake, often beyond his usual hours of rest, and sending him to bed to see in his childish dreams, those heroes, "which, in after years, his youth's pencil depicted on canvass fields, in all the reflected glory of their heroic deeds."

But a certain elderly female, called Luckie Forbes, a person of low degree, but yet, who under the humblest exterior possessed a superior mind, was the chief instructress of the sisters in legendary lore. She dwelt in a humble but comfortable abode, near some beautiful green banks rising in natural terraces behind their mother's house, standing alone at the head of a little square, near the high school, where once resided the distinguished Lord Elchies, and commanding a fine view of the Frith of Forth. There, whilst the elder would gather *gowans*, or other grass flowers, for her infant sister, their aged companion, with her knitting in her

hand, would remark on the blessed quiet of the land, where they saw cattle browzing, without fear of an enemy, and then would talk of the "awful times of the brave Sir William Wallace," when he fought for Scotland "against a cruel tyrant, like unto them Abraham overcame, when he rescued Lot, with all his herds and flocks, from the proud foray of the five robber kings of the south; who (she added) were all rightly punished, for oppressing the stranger in a foreign land! The Lord careth for the stranger!"—for Luckie Forbes, in her narratives, whether of fact or fiction, of human vanities or fairy fables, was always wont to mingle some pious allusions.

To the legends and traditions thus narrated by Luckie Forbes, we probably owe Miss Porter's popular novel of "The Scottish Chiefs," published in 1809, but at this time, and "for long, long after I heard these things," she says of herself, "I never thought of becoming a writer at all. To learn, was my sole ambition; and during the knowledge-seeking season usual with youth, my time, in conjunction with that of my dear brother and sister, was almost wholly spent in reading; the works of ancient and modern authors burying us, as it were, often from sunrise to sunset, in a total abstraction from everything else. History and biography, from the sacred Scriptures, to Plutarch's Lives; from the black-letter chronicles of England to Rapin and David Hume; and all poetry connected with the events they told of, from Greece's Homer to our British Shakspeare; from the ballad of Chevy Chase to that of our soul-stirring Rule Britannia;—this was the food with which we loved to nourish the favourite meditations of our minds: bringing to our hearts the characters which our

mother, our earliest instructress, had taught us to consider 'the excellent of the earth,' and with whom we ever afterwards aspired to dwell."

Of Mrs. Porter's family, consisting of three sons, one afterwards an eminent physician at Bristol, another, the celebrated traveller and author, Sir Robert Ker Porter, and the two daughters of whom mention has been made, Anna Maria, the youngest, was the one whose genius soonest developed itself. At the early age of four, she was sent to a day-school in Edinburgh, then kept by Mr. George Fulton, well known as the compiler of several excellent dictionaries, where she soon attracted the attention of her instructor. At five, she read Shakspeare with a precision of emphasis, and a firmness of voice unequalled by any of her schoolfellows, and at a public examination of the scholars by certain high authorities at Edinburgh, she was actually put above a young lady of sixteen, with the title of Dux, or Head of the Class.

At a very early period of life she evinced great delight in the contemplation of the beauties of nature. The murmuring of the babbling brook, the verdant valley, and the many romantic objects around her, presented incalculable charms to her enthusiastic mind. She loved to listen with rapt attention to the twitter of the birds in the hedges, to the lark warbling on high, or to the plaintive melody of the nightingale in the woodland copse.

These were the emotions of a poetical temperament; for even at the early age of seven years, she penned in printed character, before she could actually write, some verses on her mother's birthday, the first she had ever attempted. She had a decided talent for music, and

sang sweetly, though her health was too delicate to allow her to indulge in this accomplishment. She had also a correct taste for the fine arts, and her skill in modelling was beyond mediocrity; but she relinquished this pursuit, as well as that of drawing, as interfering with more important avocations.

Whilst residing at Edinburgh, the Miss Porters became acquainted in their childhood with Sir Walter Scott, their mothers being on terms of intimacy. Scott was then a light-hearted youth, and after leaving Scotland they never met again till he had published his "Waverley," and had come up to London, where the young ladies then happened to be staying; they then had the pleasure of renewing their "auld lang syne" acquaintance with him, and their remembrance of his boyish freaks in the daisy meadows near St George's-square, where his mother lived, and of the pleasant tale-telling evenings they passed under her kindness, Anna Maria then being "a wee bit bairnie sitting on a craky," (a small stool,) by his side.

This intercourse was afterwards terminated by Mrs. Porter's removing with her family to the north of England, where their residence happened to be near that of a venerable bishop, with whom they were well acquainted, and where they had free access to the Episcopal Library. Here they first read Spenser's beautiful and fascinating "Faëry Queen," and here, together with their brother, they studied many old chronicles, some of which were in black letter.

Circumstances induced Mrs. Porter to settle for some time in London, where her children continued the same absorbing and sequestered pursuits, though uniting them with other studies, arising, perhaps, from their ac-

quaintance with West, Flaxman, Northcote, Shee, and other distinguished artists. Their society was also sought by several naval and military veterans, old friends of their father. They continued, however, to live in a quiet and retired manner, their circle not being extended beyond intimate friends, till the genius of the brother and sisters became known to the world at large by its published manifestations, and even then their acquaintance was rather select than numerous.

One of the biographers of Miss Anna Maria Porter says, he well remembers "the smiling countenance, the fine, animated, delighted eyes of her mother, who had been a very handsome woman, when she conversed with her friends, and saw how completely 'the feast of reason and the flow of soul' filled the happy hearts of her children." Both the sisters have repeatedly owned, not only in their conversation, but in the prefaces to their several works, that from the eminently worthy and intel lectual persons who formed this society, they derived their models for the characters which they afterwards took such delight in portraying in those of their heroes and heroines.

The person of Miss Anna Maria Porter is said to have been elegant and graceful, and so to have continued till her last days. Her sister, Miss Porter, has drawn a pleasing picture of her appearance, together with that of their venerable parent, in their evening rambles at Esher, where they latterly resided, and where the old tower, the sole remains of Cardinal Wolsey's palace, together with the modern mansion of their friend and neighbour Mr. Spicer, were often resorted to by them :—

"Both the antique tower and the modern Place of

Esher, were frequent objects in our evening rambles. My mother and sister loved the serene sunset hour, and better loved to seek the family-dwelling, to enjoy the converse of its dear domestic tea-table. It was but a short distance from our cell; and often here, before I joined them in their walk, my eyes have pursued the picturesque little group from our rose-mantled window (a floral adornment peculiar to cottages of every degree in happy England)—I have watched them strolling over the pretty village-green, here and there studded with broken lines of old gnarled trees, under which the boys play, whose grandfathers have done the same. The dear objects of my gaze, avoiding the merry gambolers and their football paths, yet still wending their way more in my sight. My sister, with her light and graceful figure (a very Hebe supporting age) lending her arm to our mother, who took it rather as loving the prop than requiring it, for her age was as elastic in body as in mind; yet she seemed to sustain her firm steps by a slender pastoral-like staff held in her opposite hand—its stem of hickory-wood, its crook a black chamois horn. But it also was leaned on by her, rather from remembrance than weakness. It had been brought to her in her early days of marriage, by my father, from the Pyrenees; it being the fashion in those times for ladies of every age to walk with such novel appendages, and habited in dresses corresponding.

"Free from affectation of every sort, she had retained nothing of that fondly-recollected *mode*, excepting this staff of pleasing conjurations, her dress being quite in keeping with the reverential years which might have made its sustaining help necessary. By her side, or before her, usually ran a favourite little white dog, and

our neighbours who met her in their walks, used to smilingly accost her as 'the venerable shepherdess of Esher, with her pet lamb.' He always accompanied us to Esher Place, or in our stroll towards the interesting ruin, bounding through the long grass on the once gravelled avenue, and chasing birds, where aforetime the mitred equipages were wont to drive. Turning from the little animal's playful career, our thoughts centered on the object before us, the bard of Avon being in our memories, if not by our sides; and stopping at intervals under the bowery limes that fringe the declivities of the knell, or beneath the more stately elms, which in scattered groves occupy the glades below, contemplated with a meditative repose of spirit that region of stilly peace where the departing train of the princely owner of three centuries ago had last passed along. His burdened soul was then bowed with sorrow and sickness, over the head of that favourite mule, whose hitherto proudly arching neck, the historian tells us, was also bent down, as if in unison with his master's fate."

At the foot of this knoll, and nearly opposite the scene of this sadly-eloquent procession, Mrs. Porter, at that time aged eighty-four, planted, as a sort of *landmark* to the actual spot, a black walnut, raised by herself from seed given to her by a travelled friend; Mr. Rankin, the learned expositor of the "Mongul Settlements" in America, while that continent was unknown to Europe. The seed came from a revered tree that had flourished from age to age on the banks of the Ohio, dedicated by the neighbouring North American chiefs "to councils of peace, and the Great Spirit."

Within little more than a twelvemonth, Mrs. Porter

was taken from this world, when, by a strange coincidence, the infant tree, which had continued to prosper until that period, withered and died. A cypress was planted in its stead, which now points out the spot where lie the remains of her favourite dog, Bijou, who also drooped and died very shortly after the death of its venerable mistress.

And here should be recorded a feeling observation of Miss Anna Maria Porter, recorded by her sister. When making a journey into a distant county, and observing that she never looked from the window of the carriage without seeing all the walkers on the road followed by some dog or other,—"Surely," added she, "when Mr. Pitt laid a tax upon dogs, it was like taxing every man's friend."

In early childhood a resemblance was traced between the features of the subject of this memoir, and those of Sir Joshua Reynolds; and the friend who discovered it was wont to place a pair of spectacles on her nose, to render the portrait more complete. At a more advanced period, those who had known Angelica Kauffmann in her youth, observed a similarity between her and Miss Anna Maria Porter. But though some of her admirers traced marks of kindred minds between herself and these celebrated personages, and though she had a taste for the fine arts, yet literature, in its general application, was ever her greatest delight, and reading was her favourite enjoyment.

She also very early commenced to write and to publish; for at the juvenile age of thirteen, she had composed a volume entitled "Artless Tales," which appeared in 1795, to which a second volume was added in 1798. To these, and to other youthful productions, she

seldom alluded in after years, on account of the inexperienced representations of life which they contained, although they had met with a favourable reception from the public.

"Tales of Pity," which she was induced to write to instruct young people in the feeling and duty of compassion, but to which she never affixed her name, originated in her own susceptibility for the sufferings of dumb animals. As a child, she has been known to suffer paroxysms of grief on seeing persons, despite of her entreaties to the contrary, tormenting or crushing flies under their feet.

"Walsh Colville," a novel in one volume, was her next publication. This tale derives its interest chiefly from its being said to have been founded on incidents in real life, in which the writer herself was personally interested. The hero is the only son of a nobleman, who, by persuasion, is induced to allow him to enter the army; and on his first entrée into London life, he yields in some degree to the seductions and temptations purposely laid for his inexperience by false friends; whilst, on the other hand, his real ones take active measures to prevent his being ruined; and an attachment to a beautiful and amiable girl are the means they principally avail themselves of. "Walsh Colville" is also curious as marking the extraordinary improvement of style and story which afterwards took place, when the powers of the youthful writer were more fully developed.

"Octavia," a novel in three volumes, appeared in 1800; the "Lake of Killarney" followed in 1801, and "A Sailor's Friendship, and a Soldier's Love," in 1803. The scene of the "Lake of Killarney" is princi-

pally laid in Ireland, where Rose De Blaquière, the heroine, a beautiful foundling, is brought up as a daughter, by the kindness of Mr. M'Neil, an old Irish gentleman, residing on the Lake of Killarney, to whose house comes Felix Charlemont, the hero, who has been driven from his father's mansion, on the marriage of the latter with a lady of suspected reputation. Of course the young people fall in love, and of course misconception and misunderstanding arise to prevent their union. The hero joins the army in Holland, at the disastrous period of the French Revolution. Rose, meantime, accompanies some friends to Dublin, where the manners of that city, as they appeared at the close of the last century, are described. At last, everything being satisfactorily explained, the young people are united, but soon separated by the machinations of Charlemont's mother-in-law, after which they again come together, and Rose's birth and parentage, as may be supposed, are proved to be unexceptionable.

The period when Mrs. Porter first established herself, with her family, in London, was when England was a place of general refuge for the exiles who had fled alike from the insurrectionary revolution of France, where the people had arisen against the nobles; and from Poland, where monarchs had conspired to sweep from the map of nations that chivalric people. The Miss Porters' sympathies were aroused by the heart-rending narratives communicated to them, and the elder sister then felt an impulse to preserve some of the affecting accounts she had listened to, in the form of a regular story. Her brother, too, had seen and become acquainted with Kosciusko, in his way to the United States, after his liberation from prison by the Emperor

of Russia—successor to her who had cast him there. It was then that her popular tale of "Thaddeus of Warsaw" became the first fruits of her pen, and was inscribed to one of their frequent guests, Sir Sidney Smith, "the Cœur de Lion of our land and times, in those days."

"It was composed," says Miss Porter, "in a society congenial to its spirit, for the fields of Alexandria and Acre had just sent home their heroes, and the "chiefs" of them, with their happy wives, sisters, or daughters, were often at the unpretending tea-table of my mother."

At Mrs. Porter's residence, also, frequently appeared "the revered names of Mrs. Hannah More, Mrs. Barbauld, the late Lady De Crespigny, Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton, Miss Benger, and Miss Knight, (the preceptress of the late Princess Charlotte,) all of whom have long been removed to a better elysium than "poets' dreams have told."

Both her mother and sister had been much pleased with the MS. of "Thaddeus of Warsaw," which originally had been written with no thought beyond their home circle; but an old acquaintance, Mr. Owen Rees, (a partner with Messrs. Longman, Hurst, and Co., Paternoster Row,) to whom the manuscript had been shown, earnestly recommended its publication, and proposed his house as the medium through which it should appear before the public; and most, if not all, of the Miss Porters' Works were subsequently given to the world through the same friendly medium.

Within a year or two afterwards, her then celebrated brother, Ker Porter, the astonishing young painter of the great historical pictures of Seringapatam, St. Jean d'Acre, and other famous battles, went to Russia by an

especial invitation from the Emperor Alexander. With her son's departure, ceased Mrs. Porter's bond to London; and she removed, with her daughters, to a quiet cottage residence in the country—at Thames Ditton on the banks of the Thames, midst a beautifully wooded country, in which they could command the most retired solitudes, or, by crossing the river, in ten minutes be in the cloistered courts and on the terraced walks of Hampton Court; where they might indulge alike in either pensive recollections of the former illustrious dead, or in gay converse with the then social living inhabitants.

When Miss Porter, now the sole survivor of the interesting trio that then inhabited their cottage abode, revisited, some few years since, Thames Ditton, and "sought the remains of her once gladdening little home," scarcely a remnant of what it was could be traced. "Its rose-wreathed walls were bare, its gardens," continues she, "laid into a nobleman's adjacent grounds; and the venerable Mrs. Porter's pastoral cottage," (which the classic Sir Frederic Eden of Hampton Palace, her kinsman and frequent guest, had gaily supernamed Little Arcadia,) "was almost gone,—a spot which has brightened many a tourist when loitering by its trellis porch, and looking in, admired its bowery hangings studded with singing birds; its small green stands, covered with fragrant beau-pots of every flower in the season, gathered from our own garden, or sent in greater quantities to my dear sister, from the more costly parterres of our friends; she being particularly fond of nature's garlands, whether in their native wildness, or cultured to the perfection of the rarest exotics transplanted to our soil. But what was yet sweeter to her eye and ear, were the prayer and the blessing of

the "hungry and the way-worn," whom we often saw and heard pouring their modest gratitude over the wicket-gate before the porch of our door. For no weary traveller, or real object of charity, ever stopped to lean for a moment's rest on that humble paling, without attracting our mother's notice, and meeting a bounteous refreshment from her hand.

"She lived within a small distance from the wayside; and quickly descrying the 'needy and desolate' from her parlour window; or when walking in her garden, discerning them over the low fence between it and the public road, she never failed calling them in to administer to their wants; and while standing by her, we often saw them pass on rejoicing, as if they had met 'an angel in their extremity.'"

Here, in this pleasant and rural abode, realizing, as Miss Porter observes, Shenstone's picture of the "lone Cottage in the Vale,"

> "Lovely, in deepest glen, and woodland shade,
> Some rustic hand the humble portal made.
> The woodbine gaily crept the casements round;
> Within, Contentment was the hostess found,
> Who spread with rushes the neat sylvan floor,
> And decked with garlands fair the jasmined arching door,"

"surrounded by peace at home, and pleasantness abroad," did the two sisters again wield their pens for the amusement of the public.

In 1809 appeared the elder Miss Porter's very popular tale of "The Scottish Chiefs;" in 1817, her "Pastor's Fireside;" and in 1824, "Duke Christian of Lunenburgh, or Traditions of the Hartz;" which last was dedicated to his Majesty King George the Fourth.

In their short but frequent visits to London, whilst

residing at Thames Ditton, they often met in the metropolis with their old acquaintance Dr. Clarke, the learned brother of the traveller of that name. This gentleman was librarian to the king, and upon one occasion he told Miss Porter that his Majesty having had the works of the sister of Sir Robert Ker Porter recalled to his recollection by the then recent publication of her brother's "Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia, Courdistan," &c. &c., which were dedicated to the King, he took her early published volumes from the royal shelf, and was so satisfied with the historical fidelity of the heroes they portrayed, that Dr. Clarke was commanded to communicate to Miss Porter, his Majesty's gracious request that her next subject should be "The Life of his great and virtuous progenitor, Duke Christian of Lunenburgh."

"On this hint she wrote;" for, as she observes, "I could not but obey so distinguishing a command, and the royal goodness soon furnished me with many original documents for the building up of my story. It was completed near the venerable palace where most of its English scenes occurred; and when it was published, I was honoured by an assurance from my gracious sovereign that 'it had been completed to his fullest wishes.' 'The Scottish Chiefs,' Wallace and Bruce, were therefore the authors or spring-tide of the Brunswick work; and they had also 'won me favour' with our 'sometime royal neighbour,' (his late majesty, our ever-revered, ever-beloved monarch, William the Fourth,) who was then Duke of Clarence; and living at Bushy, not far from our little abode on the opposite bank of the Thames, he most condescendingly took a very encouraging interest in the progress of my work."

"The Pastor's Fire-side," notwithstanding its pacific title, was rather a tale of chivalry than of home, and home delights. It was founded on facts in the lives of two remarkable characters, Ripperda of Holland and Spain, and Duke Wharton of this country. On one occasion, when visiting Eton College, the students showed Miss Porter the chamber there where Ripperda had lodged during his refuge in England from the persecutions of ungrateful Spain.

Meanwhile the pen of Anna Maria was even more prolific in its creations than that of her elder sister: who, speaking of the leisure and seclusion for studious occupation, afforded to them by the retirement of Thames Ditton; when she was herself "in the bloom of her days, in the freshness of her most inspiring impressions;" and, what was yet dearer, in the bosom of beloved ones, from whom her heart had never wandered,—her mother and sister! she says, "My sister, Anna Maria, more brilliantly endowed, and with a judgment far beyond her years, never found it needful for her acquirements to sacrifice the genial companionship of friendship, to close study of any kind; the quickness of her perceptions giving her almost an intuitive knowledge of everything she wished to learn; while I, from childhood upwards, 'toiled up the hill' of knowledge half my days. * * *

"We had different ways of attaining the same objects. She, with the wings of her soul, fledged for the highest point which I ever saw her rapidly gain, whilst I was still labouring to follow her. But both, I trust, ultimately reached the same end. For our principles, our tastes, and our views in life were exactly the same; and when we began to write for publication, we regarded our works not as a pastime for ourselves, or a mere amuse-

ment for others, but as the use to be made of an entrusted talent 'given to us for a purpose:' and for every word we set down in our pages, we believed we must be accountable to Heaven and to our country. This sense of responsibility, certainly deepened the constitutional concentration of my thoughts, *gravitating* them perhaps a little too heavily when employed with my pen. And when, somewhat wearied, I emerged from my bird-nest chamber under the thatched eaves of our rustic dwelling, it was 'nothing loth' I sought the cheerful group I heard talking below; and then usually seated between my mother and sister, I always met some of our pleasant visitors, ready to draw me out from my absorbing pursuits, by a general conversation full of intelligence and grace."

"The Lake of Killarney" was the first of Miss Anna Maria Porter's publications at Thames Ditton. Then followed, in 1807, "The Hungarian Brothers," a pleasing narrative, which was the first of her productions to which she affixed her name; and the second edition of which appearing in the following year, she dedicated to the instructor of her early childhood, George Fulton, Esq. "Don Sebastian, or the House of Braganza," which was published in 1809, was her next work, and is considered by many to be one of the best of her performances. "Historically true," says her sister, "in its chief parts, it sympathised in its tone with my favourite subjects. The scenes of that Prince's almost incredible adventures having taken place on the border kingdom to Spain, and on the same line of the opposite African coast which had finally closed the career of my 'Duke de Ripperda.' She also wrought up into the splendid fabric of her tale, a chivalric expedition of the errant-king of

Portugal into Persia; into which she has woven much that relates to the interesting brothers, Sir Anthony and Robert Shirley, who in those times were great men in the court and camp of the accomplished and valiant Shah Abbas. Our friend, Sir Frederic Eden, of Hampton Court, lent her an old and rare book concerning them, which, with other carefully sought information, furnished the grounds on which her story was built; though it may justly be inferred, that where these narratives lacked of union, her fully imbued imagination made up the deficiency; as indeed it did in working out the completeness of the whole wondrous tale respecting king Sebastian himself. Our excellent moral poet, Mr. Southey, in his long-subsequent poem of 'Don Roderick,' has walked nearly in her steps over the almost similar fate of that also peninsular monarch."

"The Recluse of Norway," her next work, appeared in 1814, and in this her interesting character of Ellisef, representing a dutiful daughter, a devoted friend, an affectionate sister; one of those warm-hearted beings desirous of dispensing happiness all around, is supposed to be the picture most like herself of any she has drawn; though quite assuredly, unconscious of the resemblance herself. It has been observed that this is "one of the few productions which may be repeatedly read without losing any of its interest; resembling in its order of merit, the beautiful master-piece of Fenelon, "that it is impossible to rise from its perusal without feeling our selves wiser and better."

Then followed, in 1817, "The Knight of St. John," in which is introduced the celebrated defence of Malta by La Valette in 1565, against the Turks under Mus-

tapha, the general of Soliman II. Of this work an interesting circumstance is recorded, viz. that it was the last work that the then Prince Leopold read aloud to the Princess Charlotte, on the day preceding her fatal confinement and decease:—and he graciously caused the young authoress to be informed, he had sacredly preserved it ever since.

"The Fast of St. Magdalen" appeared in 1818. The scene of this work takes place between 1509 and 1512, during the expulsion of the family of the Medici from Florence, and it terminates with their triumphant return thither. By some, this work is considered as among the best that proceeded from the pen of Miss Anna Maria Porter.

"The Village of Mariendorpt" was published in 1821. The events take place during the thirty years war, after the death of Gustavus Adolphus: and the character of the hero, Rupert Rosentheim, the fond sister is said to have drawn from her brother, who was an eminent example of filial piety. Indeed Miss Jane Porter does not scruple to avow that several of those the sisters delineated, were often transcripts of living personages with whom they had the good fortune to be acquainted; for, generally speaking, unless to heighten by the force of contrast, the majority of the characters introduced in their histories are of a peculiarly amiable cast.

"The originals whence we drew our portraits," says she, "were mostly men and women, either of past times, or happily visible in our own; persons inspired by those virtues, which prepare mankind for their immortal destination, as well as accomplish them for every amiable and worthy object in this world's welfare. With

such studies for our graphic art, we could hardly miss presenting images less than exemplary. 'He that shoots at the sun,' (observed the hero of Zutphen,) 'must strike higher than he who aims at a bush.'"

And here may be recorded the opinion of the celebrated Warren Hastings, as to the tendency of the works of the Misses Porter. He had read the few works they had then published, and one day asked how it was possible that persons so young could have known so much of the human heart, and of the proper purposes of life, as these books manifested. He continued—

"Well, these pretty tales have already done much good amongst young folk like yourselves, and the old will not be the worse for such pastime; they are like a good drama, and will live when the author and the present audience are no more. To inculcate worthy things is the principle that merits the loudest applause. When Shakspeare's plays are acted, it is not the transcendent poetry of his language, but the moving virtue that language conveys, which draws forth those bursts of acclamation to a word of patriotism, or of generous feeling between man and man. Let men be what they may in their common conduct, there is always something in the very worst that affords a better hope, giving an echo, whenever distinctly heard, to the voice of truth. See then, my young friends, the importance of bringing so excellent a voice frequently to their ears, and of accustoming men's hearts to hear and own her laws."

"Roche Blanche, or the Hunter of the Pyrenees," published in 1822, was the last of Miss Anna Maria Porter's performances at Thames Ditton. The period of this tale,—during the reigns of Henry II. and Francis II. in France, and the queens Catherine of Medici,—Mary

Stuart, and Elizabeth of England, are introduced. And the Rev. Clarence Willoughby is eventually proved to be connected with the Pole family.

Miss Anna Porter had, in 1811, published a small volume of poems, entitled, "Ballad Romances," & a few of which had previously appeared in her novels.

Mrs. Porter latterly resided at Esher. She removed thither, not, Miss Porter observes, "from any desire of change, merely as change, nor to quit old acquaintances for the sometimes exhilarating novelty of new, but because the air of the humid valley of the Thames had become injurious to her own and my sister's healths, and the transfer to this higher and drier soil was not far from the time-endeared friends we had left below. In this new residence, the 'fair lot' we had drawn when fixing at Thames Ditton, followed us; and for ten successive years we lived at Esher, happy in the accession of kind neighbours, and happy in the still preserved friendship and frequent society of those who had made this valley 'a place of pleasantness to us.'" * * *

"Our abode at Esher was in the village, and a cottage still; but its situation was cheerful and airy, on the summit of a hill, (for my mother loved an open view,) commanding all those various points which had rendered that perfectly rural spot an object of interest to all respectors of historical and poetical recollections; besides a more recent claim to reverential regard, it having been the bridal residence of one Princess of England—cut off and mourned in the bloom of her youth; and of another, whose promising childhood, comprised for some years there, the hopes of the empire over which she now providentially reigns.

"The paling of my mother's garden divided her

little domain from the superb lawns and woods of Claremont Park; from whence, during its habitation by his Royal Highness Prince Leopold, she ever received the most gratifying attentions to venerable age, and presents of fruit, rare vegetables, and game in due season."

The front of the cottage-home selected by Mrs. and the Misses Porter for their residence, commanded a full view of the gates and high trees of Esher Place, opening from the village on that side of the brow of the hill. This formerly had been an ecclesiastical demesne of the celebrated Cardinal Wolsey, both in the noontide splendour of his prosperity, and also in the clouded evening of his days. But of the palmy honours of the favourite, only one tower remains to tell, now tapestried with ivy, wild clematis, and other climbing plants; whilst the modern mansion of Esher Place has been erected on the knoll on which had stood the Bishop Cardinal's summer-house; the very spot on which King Henry remarked the rising walls of his superb palace of Hampton Court, which drawing from him an expression of surprise, induced the wily favourite to assert it to be intended as "a humble offering from a poor but grateful servant, to his most august liege lord the king." Both the antique tower and modern mansion of Esher Place, were favourite resorts with the interesting inhabitants of the cottage in the vicinity.

"Soon after our removal to Esher," says Miss Porter, "we again recommenced our 'troubadour' employment. It was amusing to our mother to hear read by us at our tea-table, the produce of our morning hours; and we often benefited by her clear-sighted, but gentle criticism. She was the only person whose attention we ever invaded with a single word of our unpublished

works. We there wrote two volumes, which were printed together under the united title of 'Tales round a Winter Hearth.' My share was, 'The Old House of Huntercombe, or Berenice's Pilgrimage;' in the geography of which I followed my brother's tract in his Eastern Travels, borrowing from his pilgrimage to ancient Babylon, the local scenery I introduced in hers. My sister's moiety in these volumes were two tales; one, her simply-told, sweet, 'Jeannie Haliday,' has often been set in parallel with our long-lamented friend, Lady Ann Barnard's touching ballad of 'Auld Robin Gray.'" This was published in 1826. And in addition to these stories, of which mention has been made, 'Glenrowan,' a Scottish Tradition, and 'Lord Howth,' an Irish Legend, both stories of strange but thrilling interest, were also from the pen of the younger Miss Porter.

In 1828, appeared another work, the united production of these sisters in genius as well as in blood. This was entitled, "Coming Out," and "The Field of Forty Footsteps." The first was the production of Anna Maria, the latter of Miss Porter. "Coming Out" is, as the title proclaims, a tale of modern and fashionable life, in which Alicia Barry, a beautiful Irish girl, is taken up by a lady of rank, partly from caprice, and partly from the wish of having so attractive an object under her domicile. She is subsequently abandoned by her heartless patroness with as much levity as she had been sought, and the poor deserted protégée is left to feel the reverses of fortune and the neglect of her worldly friends, though, fortunately, she has others by whom she is never abandoned.

"The Field of Forty Footsteps," a story of the fearful and bloody times of King Charles and Cromwell, is

of thrilling and surpassing interest, equal to, if not surpassing those of the same period, written by Horace Smith, or even Walter Scott himself. The scene is laid in the open fields, now the site of the London University; and the story is founded on a legend of two brothers having fallen in mutual and mortal combat. The grass, as tradition said, never grew where these fratricides had set their foot whilst engaged in their fatal fight, though now the ground is covered with modern buildings.

Previous to this, had appeared another work by Miss Anna Maria Porter, entitled, "Honor O'Hara," in the preface of which it is stated, that the first volume had been written after the story was planned, but was then laid aside for three years from temporary loss of sight; it was then resumed, completed, and published in three volumes in 1826. This too is a tale of modern, though of more domestic life than that of "Coming Out." The heroine also is a beautiful, romantic, and high-spirited Irish girl, who, having been petted and indulged in her native land, comes to England to reside with an elderly and amiable uncle, who has married beneath himself: and from the mean spirit and vulgarity of her aunt, as well as from her own thoughtlessness and indiscretion, arise many of Honoria's troubles. It is a pleasing and interesting tale; and if the Dean's family described in this work, were drawn from real life, there will be few, probably, who will not be disposed to envy the Miss Porters their acquaintance with them.

"The Barony," called by those who knew the author, "the last notes of the pure and spotless swan," was the last production from the pen of Miss Anna Maria Porter; and by many it will be deemed the most in-

teresting and the most pleasing of her works. It was written when she was in delicate health, and was published in 1831. The character of Eveleen Hungerford, though not intended as a perfect one, is perhaps one of the sweetest and the most captivating ever portrayed; and the friendship between Aurelia Trevanion and herself, is exquisitely described. The scenes of "The Barony" are laid principally in Cornwall and London; the period is the reign of James the Second; and civil strife and warfare, as they affect domestic peace and comfort, are well portrayed therein.

Shortly after the appearance of "The Barony," this interesting trio was broken up by the death of their "time-honoured" parent, Mrs. Porter, which took place in the summer of 1831, and her remains were interred in the village churchyard of Esher. In the church itself, over the communion-table, before which she had often knelt, an altar-piece painted by himself, was placed by her son, Sir Robert Ker Porter, of our Saviour celebrating the last supper with his disciples—holding in his hand the sacred cup, the pledge of our eternal salvation.

After this event had taken place, the two sisters left Esher; and in the spring of the following year, 1832, they repaired to Bristol, where their brother, an eminent physician, resided. Here, the health of the younger, which had been long delicate, became still more enfeebled, and a few months after their arrival, Miss Anna Maria Porter was seized with a fever of an epidemic kind, and after much suffering, which she bore with exemplary fortitude and patience, she expired on the 21st of June, 1832, to the great grief of her friends, but more particularly of her sister, now the

only remaining one of the amiable and interesting inhabitants of the cottage at Esher. The melancholy event took place at the house of Mrs. Colonel Booth, Montpellier, near Bristol. Her remains were interred in the burial-place of her brother, Dr. Porter, at St. Paul's Church in that city.

The amiable character of Miss Anna Maria Porter appears well summed up in the word "transparent," which her friend, Major Moyle Sherer,* was wont to apply to it; her sister adds, "her countenance, her manner, her language, being all at once expressive of the sincerity and purity of her soul."

The voluminous productions of Miss Anna Maria Porter, scarcely less popular than those of her elder sister, have most of them gone through several editions. In all, she has shown herself the friend of religion and humanity:—and the character of the performances of the two sisters was elegantly described by a reverend friend in a subsequent conversation with Miss Porter at Shirly Park, the house of Mr. and Mrs. Skinner,—when imaginative literature happened to be the topic, and its influence on society, even to the deepest interests of man.

"After some observations had passed on the novels and romances of the country, Mr. O'Sullivan looked to me," writes Miss Porter, "and with impressive earnestness said, 'You and your sister were very young when you began to be authors; but you made a field of your own—you and she came forward, the first to teach in such works—the first to inculcate Christianity in stories of romance. You came forth with doctrines, that there was and is, the same moral law for man as for woman;

* This gentleman is the justly celebrated author of "Recollections in the Peninsula," "The Life of the Duke of Wellington," &c.

that no other is sanctioned by Heaven; you declared it boldly, and have sustained it steadily."

"Works of imagination so principled, come almost as a new doctrine, though it is, and always was, the divine law. It struck with its deserved force, and caused a new era among us. They were greedily read at that critical period of life, when youth look for pictures of that world in which they are panting to become actors. With hearts open to every impression, and eager to embrace them, they are as ready to take an impulse for their bursting energies, to good, as to misleading evil; and if they do not meet the noble and the true to give the bias, the false and the selfish are ever on tiptoe to turn the awakening passions into their own career. I speak by experience. I read your early works in my own youth. Thousands felt the same that I did, and everywhere acknowledged their effect—infusing the great doctrines of universal purity, without the formality of preaching it; teaching in effect, by example. Our Divine Instructor himself, set the model—he breathed the breath of life into precept, by parable.

"So dedicating female talents," added he, turning to Miss Agnes Strickland, authoress of the "Queens of England," who was present, "is fulfilling the end for which they were bestowed; a peculiar christian duty, lady, in your sex, when so endowed; a grateful debt to that religion, which alone has elevated woman again to that station in creation which she had lost by the fall."

His concluding observation, is well worth remembrance, by all authors and writers of both sexes. "The immortality of a work, like the happy immortality of the soul, does not lie in its superior faculties, but in the

use to which they are applied—in its virtue—its power to move men's minds to good thoughts and great actions." And to accomplish such an aim was the meek, but energetic object of Miss Anna Maria Porter.

WORKS.

Artless Tales, 2 vols. 1793—95.

Tales of Pity, 1 vol.

Walsh Colville, 1 vol.

Octavia, 3 vols. 1798.

Lake of Killarney, 3 vols. 1804.

A Soldier's Friendship, and a Soldier's Love, 3 vols. 1805.

The Hungarian Brothers, 3 vols. 1807.

Don Sebastian, 3 vols. 1809.

Ballad Romances and other Poems, 1 vol. 1811.

The Recluse of Norway, 4 vols. 1814.

The Knight of St. John, 3 vols. 1817.

The Fast of St. Magdalen, 3 vols. 1818.

The Village of Mariendorpt, 3 vols. 1821.

Roche Blanche, or the Hunter of the Pyrenees, 3 vols. 1832.

Glenowan, a Scottish Tradition; Lord Howth, an Irish Legend; and Jeannie Halliday, a Tale of our own Times; in Tales Round a Winter's Hearth, 1826.

Honor O'Hara, 3 vols. 1826.

Coming Out, 2 vols. 1828.

The Barony, 3 vols. 1831.

MRS. MACLEAN.

MRS. MACLEAN, far better known to the public as L. E. L., or Letitia Elizabeth Landon, was descended from an ancient and highly respectable family, settled at one time at Crednall, in Herefordshire; where, till the disastrous period of the South Sea Scheme, they were in the possession of landed property. The whole of the patrimonial estates were then lost through the unfortunate speculations of Sir William Landon; in consequence of which, his descendants were obliged to provide for themselves by their own exertions.

One of them, the great-grandfather of Miss Landon, was the rector of Nursted and Ilsted, in Kent, where he died in 1777. His son, the Rev. John Landon, was also in the church, and held the rectory of Tedstone Delamere, near Bromyard, in Herefordshire, from 1749 to 1782.

Mr. Landon had a family of eight children, of whom Miss Landon's father was the eldest. He entered the navy in early life, but afterwards became an army agent. He married Miss Catharine Jane Bishop, a lady of Welsh extraction, and settled in the house which is now No. 25,

Hans-place, Chelsea, where, on the 14th of August, 1802, was born their celebrated daughter, Letitia Elizabeth Landon.

She was the eldest of three children, of whom one, a girl, died at the age of thirteen; the other was her brother, the Rev. Whittington Henry Landon, the attached and long the almost inseparable companion of her childhood and youth, and for whom she appears to have felt a peculiarly strong attachment; and to him is addressed a beautiful poem, descriptive of the feelings of their early days, when first perusing the voyages of Captain Cook.

Miss Landon received the first rudiments of education from an invalid friend and neighbour, who was wont to throw the letters of the alphabet over the carpet, and on the infant scholar bringing to her the right one, she received some trivial reward, which, on her return home, was displayed in the drawing-room, and invariably shared with her brother, who consequently was wont to look very earnestly for the hour of her appearance. She was only in her sixth year when she was sent for some months to a school kept by Miss Rowden, subsequently Countess St. Quentin, at No. 22, Hans-place, in which house she in after years resided for several years with the Misses Lance as a boarder.

Up to this period Miss Landon had never left London, excepting on short visits to a place called Coventry Farm, on the borders of Hertfordshire, where her father, confiding the superintendence of his projects to a brother, speculated deeply, and became in consequence, subsequently, greatly embarrassed in his circumstances. In the meantime, his more prosperous brother, Whittington, under the patronage and favour of the Duke of

Portland, rose to honours and distinction in the church, being provost for more than thirty years of Worcester College, Oxford, besides being appointed to the lucrative deanery of Exeter, which he held till his decease in 1839. Another brother had the livings of Aberford, in Yorkshire, and Amesbury.

Miss Landon seems to have been a frequent visitor at the house of her different relatives; and upon one occasion she thus playfully describes the dismay of her cousins at her deficiency in certain fashionable acquirements; for which, indeed, L. E. L. seems never to have had any taste.

"The younger ones were sadly distressed at my want of accomplishments. When I first arrived, Julie and Isabel began to cross-question me—'Can you play?'—'No.' 'Can you sing?'—'No.' 'Can you speak Italian?'—'No.' 'Can you draw?'—'No.' At last they came down to 'Can you write and read?' Here I was able to answer to their great relief, 'Yes, a little.' I believe Julie, in the first warmth of cousinly affection, was going to offer to teach me the alphabet."

But though, as she elsewhere says of herself, "for music she had no ear, for drawing no eye, and dancing was positively terrible to her timid temper," yet was she a very clever girl, with a mind far beyond her years, though lacking the knowledge which alone could teach her how to use its powers. Plain as a child, and deficient in showy and attractive accomplishments, she was so nervously shy, that she was often unable to repeat the lesson she had thoroughly mastered, from over-anxiety to say it well, and the words died upon her lips, which were thoroughly imprinted on her memory; whilst, as is often the case with timid dispositions, the

tears which rose too readily in her eyes were imputed to sullenness, rather than to their real source, bashfulness.

When about seven years of age, Miss Landon's parents removed to Trevor Park, not far from East Barnet, where, amidst scenes vividly depicted in various passages in her later works, were passed many of the happiest days of her childhood. In the "Traits and Trials of Early Life," in "The History of a Child," she is supsed to have portrayed that of her own early years, but the account is part romance and part reality. She describes "a large, old, and somewhat dilapidated place," —of which "only part of the grounds were kept in their original high order." Here she was wont "to wander in the almost deserted shrubberies, where the flowers grew in all the luxuriance of neglect over the walls." According to the same fictitious picture, on a small island, in a deep pond, almost dark with the depth of shadow, and partly covered with water lilies, "with the large green leaves that support the loveliest of ivory boats, fit for the fairy queen and her summer court," grew one curiously-shaped but huge yew-tree, and in the shadows of this gloomy tree the embryo poetess was wont to conceal herself for the whole of her play-time, "chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy," and brooding over the troubles and sorrows which necessarily await every shy and sensitive person, and which are perhaps never more acutely felt than in the days of early childhood. Her childhood, however, was cheerful, and often joyous.

Miss Landon appears to have been endowed with peculiarly sensitive feelings, which, though they caused her perhaps to magnify and exaggerate "the ills and woes that mortal man await;" yet, at the same time,

enabled her, like all other imaginative children, to create for herself a fairy land of her own, in which she would find consolation for her sorrows and troubles, whether real or imaginary. She read with avidity everything which came in her way, giving the preference, very naturally, to romance and poetry; and though the prudent and thoughtful cousin, who undertook the care of her education whilst at Trevor Park, "always made it her particular care never to allow of her reading novels, knowing it would only weaken her mind, and give it a distaste to more serious reading," yet, despite the prohibition, Cooke's novelists and poets were all read through, even in the early days of childhood.

The reading of a new book appears to have been an epoch in her existence, and indeed of Robinson Crusoe, as she observes, the first perusal thereof is an epoch in every child's life. She says of herself, "For weeks after reading that book, I lived as if in a dream; indeed I scarcely dreamt of anything else at night. I went to sleep with the cave, its parrots and goats, floating before my closed eyes. I awakened in some rapid flight from the savages landing in their canoes. The elms in our hedges were not more familiar than the prickly shrubs which formed his palisades, and the grapes whose drooping branches made fertile the wide savannahs."

Of the "Arabian Nights," she states, "the world thereof for a time became hers;" her little lonely island, dark with the mingled shade of the yew and the willow, whilst perusing them, was deserted for a gayer retreat, and she found a summer palace amid the beautiful boughs of a large acacia, where amid the odours of sweet smelling flowers, and the murmuring hum of

bees, she made herself familiar with those splendid creations of oriental fancy. "The delight of reading these enchanted pages," she observes, "she ever ranked as the most delicious excitement of her life," and to a late friend, she fondly recalled "the delicious odour of the Russian leather in which they were bound, and the charming glance at the numerous pictures which glanced through the half opened leaves" when they were presented to her by her father.

Whilst still a child, she would pace for hours up and down a certain lime-walk, in the grounds of Trevor Park, deprecating interruption, "because she had such a beautiful thought in her head;" sometimes in silence, sometimes talking to herself, at others thinking aloud in verse; and at night she would inflict on her brother a long story, or an account of her intended *travels;* and singular to say, as a moth flits round the flame that is to be its destruction, so Africa, where she was eventually to find an untimely and mysterious death, was the country generally predominant in her mind, as that she most wished to visit. Her father's voyage thither as a young man might possibly have first turned her attention to that quarter of the globe, and this predilection was confirmed by a book which he gave her when a child, called "Silvester Tramper," which quite captivated her youthful fancy with its narratives of lions, bushmen, and other wonderful things.

Her brother did not appear, at all times, to have lent a willing ear to the marvellous creations of his sister; as, to induce him to listen to them, she was forced to agree to the bargain, that one day he should hear her stories, and on the following, she was to adopt his amusements. And a fresh stipulation was afterwards made, "that she was

not to repeat the same story oftener than twice or three times at the most." One of their pastimes was playing at "being Spartans," and their greatest reproach would be to call each other "Sybarite," aiming to carry the Spartan maxims, of which they read in Plutarch's Lives, into common life.

Vain were the attempts to teach Letitia the art of fine penmanship, but no sooner could she scrawl, than her slate became her constant companion, on which the thick-coming fancies of the infant poetess were jotted down, oftentimes in the dark, as she invariably took it with her when she retired to rest, in order that she might commemorate any thought which struck her in the night. One of her first attempts at literary composition which was exhibited for perusal, though not now in existence, was on her cousin Captain Landon's return from America; another of her earliest pieces was a sketch of the character of Sir John Doyle, after reading an account of the Peninsular war.

Though the active mind of Miss Landon seems to have revolted against the drudgery and the mechanical part of education, generally so called, yet she appears rather to have acquired by intuition, than to have learnt everything in which she took an interest, and her French masters found the task of instruction a pleasure rather than a trouble, from the quickness with which she acquired the language. As for music, though vain were the attempts to force her into an artist, yet "it seemed to charm and inspire her, and for hours she would sit writing on her slate, whilst any one played or sung."

Though she emancipated herself as soon as possible from the trouble of practising, as many of the miseries of her

early life had arisen from being obliged to learn to play upon the piano, few, perhaps, felt more deeply the mental enjoyment, if it may be so termed, which arises from music, when it appeals to the heart rather than to the ear, awakening a whole host of tender and practical associations. In her "Romance and Reality," she thus illustrates her own feelings on the subject.

"The love of music, like a continent, may be divided into two parts; first the scientific appreciation which depends on natural organization, and highly cultivated taste; and secondly, the love of sweet sounds for the sake of the associations linked with them, and the feelings they waken from the depths of memory; the latter is a higher tone than the former, and in the first only are we English deficient. The man who stands listening to a barrel organ, because he loves the tones 'he heard from the lips of his nurse,' or who follows a common ballad-singer, because her song is familiar in its sweetness, or linked with touching words, or hallowed by the remembrance of some other and dearer voice, surely that man has more a soul for music than he who raves about execution, chromatic runs, semi-tones, &c. We would liken music to Aladdin's lamp—worthless in itself, not so for the spirits which obey its call. We love it for the buried hopes, the garnered memories, the tender feelings, it can summon with a touch."

Though she neither drew nor painted, yet with the pen she could bring the scene she described to the imagination, with a vividness that evinced she had viewed it in her mind's eye with an artist's vision, when merely perhaps the creation of her own brain. Although by no means partial to the country as a residence, yet she threw over everything she saw there the halo of her

own poetic fancy; whilst she also duly appreciated the picturesque effect of various scenes in London, only unheeded because of frequent occurrence. On one occasion she observes, "I do own I have a most affectionate attachment to London; the deep voice of her multitudes 'haunts me like a passion;' I delight in observing the infinite variety of her crowded streets, the rich merchandize of the shops, the vast buildings, whether raised for pomp, commerce, or charity; down to the barrel-organ, whose music is only common because it is beautiful. * * Let any one ride down Highgate Hill on a summer's day, see the immense mass of buildings spread like a dark panorama, hear the ceaseless and peculiar sound, which has been likened to the hollow roar of the ocean, but has an utterly differing tone; watch the dense cloud that hangs over all—one perpetual storm, which yet bursts not,—and then say, if ever was witnessed hill or valley that so powerfully impressed the imagination with that sublime and awful feeling, which is the epic of poetry."

In her "Scenes in London," she has imparted much poetical beauty to those she has described; but with all her love for the metropolis, she, like every one else, protests against being buried there, for as she observes, "If there be one object more material, more revolting, more gloomy than another, it is a crowded churchyard in a city. It has neither sympathy nor memory. The pressed down stones lie heavy upon the very heart. The sunshine cannot get at them for smoke. There is a crowd, and like most crowds, there is no companionship. * * * No one can love London better than I do; but never do I wish to be buried there. It is the best place in the world for a house, but the worst place for a

grave. An Irish patriot once candidly observed to me, 'Give me London to live in, but let me die in green Ireland;' now this is precisely my opinion."

Considering Miss Landon's predilection for London, it was fortunate that it was her fate to spend the greater part of her life in or near the metropolis, and singular, that it should be her fate, after thus protesting against a tomb there, that she should have found an untimely and premature grave on the uncivilized and almost unknown shores of Africa; there, according to her poetical wish,

> "Perhaps some kindly hand may bring
> Its offering to the tomb;
> And say, as fades the rose in spring
> So fadeth human bloom."

In 1815, when Miss Landon was about thirteen years of age, the family quitted Trevor Park, and after a twelvemonth's residence at Lewis Place, Fulham, Mr. Landon removed to Brompton, where a considerable part of his daughter's youth was passed, excepting a year or two spent with her grandmother in Sloane-street, and some occasional visits to her relations. Here, no sooner was she emancipated from the school-room, and allowed to pursue the bent of her own mind, than her poetical reveries were committed to paper, and through the encouraging kindness of Mr. Jerdan, the editor of the Literary Gazette, to whose judgment they were submitted, while still in her teens, the youthful writer had the pleasure of seeing some of her verses first appear in print, in the pages of that periodical, and visions of fame, perhaps, in some degree comforted her for the reverses to which her family were then beginning to be subjected.

"The Fate of Adelaide," a Swiss romantic tale, dedicated to Mrs. Siddons, a story of love, war, and misery, with some minor poems, was published by Mr. Warren, of Bond-street, in a small volume in 1821, when she was about nineteen; and from that period till 1824, a series of "Poetical Sketches," to which were annexed L. E. L. only, appeared in the Literary Gazette, and speedily L. E. L. became a favourite with the public, whose curiosity to penetrate the mystery in which the youthful poetess seemed involved, was enhanced, perhaps, by the singularity of the signature.

The first of her principal poetical works, "The Improvisatrice," appeared in 1824, and in the summer of the succeeding year, followed "The Troubadour," with "Poetical Sketches of Modern Pictures and Historical Sketches," both of which volumes were published by Messrs. Hurst and Robinson.

To her father, whom she lost about this time, Miss Landon seems to have been most enthusiastically attached. He lived long enough to hail the dawn of his daughter's literary fame, and left her to struggle with all the difficulties which surround a young and fascinating female, admired and caressed by some, envied and slandered by others. She thus touchingly alludes to the discomforts of her situation in a letter addressed to her friend Mrs. Thomson in the following year.

"The more I think of my past life, and of my future prospects, the more dreary do they seem. I have known little else than privation, disappointment, unkindness, and harassment; from the time I was fifteen my life has been one continual struggle, in some shape or other, against absolute poverty, and I must say not a

tithe of my profits have I ever expended on myself. And here I cannot but allude to the remarks on my dress. It is easy for those whose only trouble on that head is change, to find fault with one who never in her life knew what it was to have two dresses at a time. No one knows but myself what I have had to contend with."

Much to Miss Landon's honour, it must be stated, that the fruits of her literary exertions were almost invariably applied to the support and maintenance of her family, and to the assistance of her brother when he was sent to Oxford by his uncle, as he loved, indeed, affectionately to remember and to acknowledge; and, in after times, to her amiable exertion in his behalf, when he was canvassing for the secretaryship of the Literary Fund, was he mainly indebted for his success, many personages of rank and distinction avowedly paying their homage to the merits of the sister, by giving their vote to her brother.

The Christmas of 1825 was spent by Miss Landon at the house of her uncle, the Rev. James Landon, at Aberford, near Wetherby, in Yorkshire, and subsequently she boarded with the Misses Lance in Hans Place, excepting when on visits to her friends. She continued their inmate till they quitted their house, after which she resided there with Mrs. Sheldon, who removed in 1837, to No. 28, Upper Berkeley-street West, where L. E. L. remained till within a short period of her marriage.

Miss Landon soon formed many literary acquaintances and friendships, and her society appears to have been very generally sought, as her conversational powers were as brilliant as her poetical talents were

great. She possessed a keen sense of the ludicrous, and frequently amused herself by putting grave things in a laughable light, but in her satire there was nothing ill-natured or severe; and sometimes, whimsically assuming a character totally foreign to her own, she would express sentiments and maintain opinions, which would have impressed those not well acquainted with her worth, with the idea that she was a trifling and unintellectual person.

The same friend who has expressed the above opinion of her, observes that "the conversation of L. E. L. was as brilliant as her writings, showing upon all occasions which called it forth, not merely in society, where she was the idol, but as the solitary companion of the rural walk, or fireside, always ready to amuse and be amused, and avenging any little quarrel with the world by the utterance of some misanthropic sentiment, the only ebullition of temper she was known to indulge."

Mr. Laman Blanchard, her confidential friend and literary executor, to whom she entrusted materials for the biography with which he has since favoured the world, and to the pages of which we are mainly indebted for this memoir, observes, "It would be no easy task to trace her studies in regular order, or to point out the sources of her extensive and varied knowledge. She often exhibited an acquaintance with books which could hardly by accident (it would appear) have been thrown in her way; and how she acquired, so early in life as she did, an insight into those subjects of foreign lore which she afterwards evinced a thorough acquaintance with, was little short of a mystery. She was well read in French, and almost equally well in Italian literature. She had, in truth, been an indefa-

tigable reader; and while triflers in society listened, expecting that her talk would be of moonlight and roses, they were often surprised to hear her—unless mirth happened to be her object, or satire or mystification her choice—discussing the character of a distant age, or the rise of a great nation; the influence of a mighty genius upon his cotemporaries; the value of a creed worn out; or some historical event, a judgment of which demanded —what she would not fail to exhibit if she spoke at all —an insight into the actions, the policy, and the manners of the time to which it related. Her studies, in short, put her in possession of great advantages, which her excellent memory enabled her to turn readily to account."

Miss Landon was not strictly handsome, her eyes being the only good feature in her face; but her countenance was intellectual and piquant, and her figure slight and beautifully proportioned. Altogether, however, her clear complexion, dark hair and eyes, the vivacious expression with which the latter were lighted up when animated and in good health, combined with her kind and fascinating manners to render her extremely attractive; so that the rustic expression of sentiment from the Ettrick Shepherd, when he was first introduced to her, "I did nae think ye had been sae bonny," was perhaps the feeling experienced by many when they first beheld L. E. L.

Among the literary friends and associates of Miss Landon, with some of whom she was on terms of intimacy, may be enumerated Mrs. Thomson, the lady of Dr. Anthony Todd Thomson, the authoress of the "Memoirs of the Court of Henry VIII.," the histori-

cal romance of "Anne Boleyn," &c., Mrs. S. C. Hall, with whom she became acquainted in 1828, Miss Edgeworth, Mrs. Jameson, Mr. Procter, Allan Cunningham, Miss Jewsbury, afterwards Mrs. Fletcher, and Miss Emma Roberts.

In December, 1826, Messrs. Longman and Co. published "The Golden Violet, with Tales of Chivalry and Romance," in which a pleasing but fanciful account is given of the institution of the prize of the Golden Violet, for which compete minstrels of various countries, with ballads, tales, and romances, in different measures, "On the first-born of loveliest May," each striving for the beautiful flower of gold.

In October, 1829, by the same publishers, appeared her "Venetian Bracelet, The Lost Pleiad, The History of the Lyre, and other Poems:" and in the autumn of 1835, Messrs. Saunders and Otley published her "Vow of the Peacock," suggested by Mr. Maclise's splendid picture on the same subject, which had attracted her attention as a subject for poetical composition.

In addition to these works, she still continued a frequent contributor of poetical fragments to the Literary Gazette, in which her verses had made their first appearance. Several poems also appeared in the "Annuals" and "New Monthly Magazine;" and in 1831, she undertook the management of "Fisher's Drawing-room Scrap Book," the eighth and last volume of which was completed in 1838, immediately previous to her departure from England. In 1832, she produced twelve accompaniments to some engravings, by the same publishers, under the title of "The Easter Gift, a Religious Offering," in the illustration of which, she

states she "had the opportunity of embodying many a sad and serious thought which had arisen in hours of solitude and despondency."

In the lighter departments of criticism, she was also a devoted labourer, and it is stated that "were her opinions upon books and authors impartially extracted and collected in volumes, there would be seen in them the result of great miscellaneous reading, research in more than one foreign language, acuteness and brilliancy of remark, without one ungenerous or vindictive sentiment, one trace of unkindly or interested feeling."

L. E. L. has herself remarked, that "a history of the *how* and *where* works of imagination have been produced, would often be more extraordinary than the works themselves." A friend of hers observes, that "though a dilettante of literature would assign for the scene of her authorship a fairy-like boudoir, with rose-coloured and silver hangings, filled with all the luxuries of a fastidious taste," yet the reality was of a very different nature; for though her drawing-room was prettily furnished, "it was her invariable habit to write in her bed-room,—"a homely-looking, almost uncomfortable room, fronting the street, and barely furnished—with a simple white bed, at the foot of which was a small, old, oblong-shaped sort of dressing-table, quite covered with a common worn writing-desk, heaped with papers, while some strewed the ground, the table being too small for aught besides the desk. A little high-backed cane chair, which gave you any idea but that of comfort, and a few books scattered about, completed the author's paraphernalia."

Love and chivalry were the favourite topics of Miss

Landon's muse, and whilst she identified herself in idea with those whose sorrows she sang, lamenting, often in the first person, over disappointments and treacheries she never had then experienced, it may easily be supposed that those readers who were wholly unacquainted with the fair poetess, naturally concluded her to be the pining victim of unrequited affection. One of her friends, however, asserts, that so far from this having been the case, she manifested an extraordinary want of succeptibility in affairs of the heart, which she imputes to her having formed, in her own imagination, a beau ideal, to which standard of perfection none of her numerous admirers ever attained.

Her temper seems to have been naturally amiable and obliging, but from an extreme susceptibility of her nervous system, she was impatient under pain, and occasionally suffered severely from spasms or cramp, for which no adequate cause could be assigned. When highly excited, she experienced a sensation of atmospheric oppression,— when her constitutional irritability of temperament would find relief only in rapid motion in the open air, and however inclement might be the weather, she would pace for hours in the garden, or if she found that too bounded for her feelings, she would seek a wider space.

Her delicacy of feeling and irritability of frame rendered her very unequal to stand up against the various ill-natured rumours and remarks which perhaps were put into circulation by those who were envious of the admiration she excited, and the success of her literary labours. So deeply did she feel the unkindness of the suspicions, that of herself she broke off a matrimonial engagement into which she was at one time about to

enter, though she had, in addition to the mental sufferings which she endured upon the occasion, a severe fit of illness in consequence.

In 1830, Miss Landon commenced her first novel, entitled "Romance and Reality," which was published in the following year. The plot of this novel is, perhaps, somewhat deficient in interest; a young lady, a beautiful, spoilt, and petted heiress, comes up from the country to be domiciled with a handsome and agreeable young man, with whom she falls in love, though his affections are placed elsewhere, and she eventually dies of a broken heart in consequence. We can all feel for a heroine who is deceived, betrayed, or ill-used, but not so easily do we sympathize with one who volunteers an attachment without any sufficient grounds for so doing. The story, moreover, is burdened with a number of scenes, that have no reference to the plot, and with conversations and descriptions of living characters apparently only introduced as vehicles for some piquant remark, witty allusion, or mournful and half-moral reflection.

In the following passage she probably describes her own bitter experience:

"Enthusiasm is the royal road to success. Now, call it fame, vanity—what you will—how strange and how strong is the feeling which urges on the painter or the author! We ought to marvel less at the works produced, than at the efforts made. Their youth given to hopes, or rather fears—now brightening and now darkening, on equally slight grounds.

'A breath can mar them, as a breath has made,'—

hours of ceaseless exertion in solitude, of feverish solici-

tude or society: doomed to censure, which is always in earnest, and to praise, which is not. Alas! we talk of their vanity; we forget that in doling forth the careless sneer, we are bestowing but the passing thought of a moment to that which has been the work of an existence. Truly, genius, like virtue, ought to be its own reward, but it cannot. Bitter though the toil, and vain the hope, human exertion must still look to human approbation."

"Francesca Carrera," the next prose production of Miss Landon's pen, was published by Mr. Bentley in 1834. In this the story is considerably more interesting than that of "Romance and Reality;" but it is too uniformly melancholy; for as if from a presentiment of her own sad and untimely end, Miss Landon appears to have delighted in portraying death scenes, most of which are sudden and violent. In "Romance and Reality" there are four or five described, and in "Francesca Carrera" not less than eight, including the fatal catastrophe with which the work concludes.

That Miss Landon was aware of the melancholy strain of her own writings, is apparent from the following observations.

"I have been told that my writings are too melancholy. How can that be a reproach, if they are true? and that they are true, I attest the sympathy of others and my own experience. If I have painted a state of moral lassitude, when the heart is left like a ruined and deserted city, where the winged step of joy, and the seven-stringed lute of hope have ceased each to echo the other; where happiness lies cold and dead on its own threshold; where dust lies dry and arid over all, and there is no sign of vegetation or promise of change—if I

paint such a state, it is because I know it well. Alas! over how many things now does my regret take its last and deepest tone—despondency! I regret not the pleasures that have passed, but that I have no longer any relish for them. I remember so much, which, but a little while ago, would have made my heart beat with delight, and which I now think even tiresome. The society which once excited, is now wearisome. The book which would have been a fairy gift to my solitude, I can now scarcely read. So much for the moral world: and as for the imaginary world, I have overworked my golden vein. Some of the ore has been fashioned into fantastic, perhaps beautiful shapes, but now they are for others, and not for me! Once, a sweet face, a favourite flower, a thought of sorrow, touched every pulse with music. Now, half my time, my mind is too troubled, too worldly, and too sullen for song. Alas, for pleasure, and still more, for what made it pleasure!

"But still more I regret the energy of industry which I once knew. I no longer delight in employment for the mere exertion—I am so easily fatigued and disheartened. I see too clearly the worthlessness of fulfilled hope. How vain seems so much that I once so passionately desired; and yet not always. The more disgusted I am with the present—with its faithless friends, its petty vanities, and its degrading interests, the more intensely does my existence blend itself with the future—the more do I look forward with an engrossing and enduring belief, that the creative feeling, the ardent thought, have not poured themselves forth wholly in vain. Good heaven! even to myself how strange appears the faculty or rather the passion of composition, how the

inmost soul develops its inmost nature on the written page!"

These somewhat querulous observations, however, perhaps only resolve themselves into the sensation of disappointment on the part of the young and inexperienced, that we cannot at the same time enjoy the blossoms of spring, the foliage of summer, and the fruits of autumn, and that the same individual cannot at the same period expect to possess the prize of hope, the pleasures of memory, and the benefits of experience.

The truth is, that Miss Landon's disposition was peculiarly lively and cheerful, her conversation was playful, and her letters were so characterised by easy gaiety, as to induce her friends to wish that she had no other employment than that of chronicling passing events, and painting the form and fashion of the time.

"Ethel Churchill, or the Two Brides," the last of Miss Landon's novels, which was published by Mr. Colburn, appeared in 1837. In elegance of expression and beauty of description, this perhaps far exceeds her preceding performances, but unfortunately the plot is an unpleasing one, and Lady Marchmont, one of the brides, becomes so disgustingly and revoltingly wicked, that the interest of the work is seriously injured thereby.

It appears, indeed, that in Lady Marchmont's derelictions from virtue, Miss Landon had a moral object in view, as she states in the preface, "To show the necessity of a strong and guiding principle—to put in the strongest light, that no vanity, no pleasure, can ever supply the place of affection; to soften and to elevate, has been the object of the following pages. I know too

well that I cannot work out my own ideal, but I deeply feel that it is beautiful and true."

It was in the summer of 1834 that an opportunity occurred for Miss Landon, through the medium of Sir A. Farquhar and his daughter, to visit Paris, where her friend, Miss Turin, was then staying. She had, in fact, determined on laying the scene of a new novel in the period of the French revolution, and it was desirable for her to become acquainted with the locality of the places she was to describe.

Though expressing herself delighted with Paris, she seems to have had a horror of sight-seeing, for she says of herself, "I really do not, in my heart, care for all the articles in marble, stone, or brick, that were ever ushered in with a paragraph in the Stranger's Guide. In my plan of Paradise, people will ride very little, and walk not at all. In revenge, they shall have the most comfortable chairs, and talk from morning till night."

A pleasing though somewhat melancholy little volume, entitled "Traits and Trials of Early Life," containing prose stories for children, by L. E. L., was published by Mr. Colburn in 1836. In the "History of a Child," she appears to have recorded the reminiscences of her own childhood, which render it particularly interesting, and perhaps in the picture of her own she has described the feelings and sensations of most timid and reserved, but at the same time clever and imaginative children.

It was in the autumn of 1836, that Miss Landon first met Mr. George Maclean, at the house of a mutual acquaintance at Hampstead. This gentleman was the eldest son of the Rev. James Maclean, of Urquhart, Elgin, and nephew to Lieut.-general Sir John Maclean. When about eighteen, he had been appointed secretary

to the governor of Sierra Leone, and was still very young when he was himself appointed to the responsible situation of governor of Cape Coast Castle. Africa, the object of Miss Landon's early interest, was a ready topic of delightful conversation, and, like Desdemona, she soon learnt to "love him for thedangers he had past;" and perhaps "he loved her that she did pity them."

A mutual attachment ensued, and their marriage took place on the 7th of June, 1838, at St. Mary's, Bryanstone-square, the ceremony being performed by the bride's brother, and Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer enacting the part of father upon the occasion, by giving the bride away. On the 5th of the following July, the ship Maclean, having the governor and his lady on board, sailed from Portsmouth for Cape Coast.

Up to the period of her embarkation, L. E. L. seems to have continued her literary avocations. On one occasion she poetically illustrated the "Flowers of Loveliness," for Mr. Ackermann, and also edited a "Book of Beauty" for Mr. Heath. She likewise still contributed to the "Literary Gazette," "Court Journal," "New Monthly Magazine," and Mr. Schloss's "Bijou Almanac."

"Castruccio Castrucani," a tragedy, a posthumous publication, seems to have been only barely completed before she left England. "In this," she says, "her aim was to represent the first risings of the feudal system, and Castruccio is the attempted ideal of the hero and the patriot.

Though obliged to resign the editorship of the "Drawing-room Scrap-book," &c., in consequence of her leaving England, she, notwithstanding, entered into many literary engagements. Another novel was to be

written, to be published by Mr. Colburn; the "New Monthly Magazine" was to receive contributions from her pen; and for a publication of Mr. Heath, she was to illustrate the female characters in Scott's novels, some of which were written from memory, but, through the kindness of Mr. Hutton, a gentleman at Cape Coast Castle, she was enabled to re-peruse them there, "with a pleasure which only those who have been placed in similar circumstances can understand." Indeed, during her short abode in Africa, her pen appears, notwithstanding the climate, and other various calls upon her attention, to have been quite indefatigable.

The voyage to Cape Coast, where they landed on the 1st of August, seems to have been unattended by any incident of interest, beyond its having given rise to a beautiful "Address to the Polar Star," which derived particular interest from appearing in the same magazine which, on the 1st of January, 1839, gave an account of her melancholy and untimely end.

In her letters to her friends, she gives several pleasing accounts of her feelings in that distant part of the world, where she states she was enacting "a sort of female Robinson Crusoe." In one place she says, "I am very well, and very happy; my only regret—the emerald ring that I fling into the dark sea of life to propitiate fate—is the constant sorrow I feel whenever I think of those whose kindness is so deeply treasured." In another, written on the morning of her death, she describes the place as infinitely superior to all she ever dreamt of. "The castle is a fine building, with excellent rooms, on three sides surrounded by the sea. I like the perpetual dash on the rocks; one wave comes up after another, and is for ever dashed to pieces, like human hopes, that

only swell to be disappointed. We advance—up springs the shining path of love or hope—'a moment white, then gone for ever.' The land view, with its cocoa and palm trees, is very striking,—it is like a scene in the Arabian Nights. Of a night the beauty is very remarkable; the sea is of a silvery purple, and the moon deserves all that has been ever said in her favour."

In several places she playfully describes her troubles in housekeeping, to which she had never been accustomed previously. She tells her brother, "You would be surprised at the pains I have taken. I give out everything. I have made lists of everything, and I stand over the cleaning of everything. But I will give you the history of one day: I rise at seven, breakfast at eight—give my orders—give out everything; flour, sugar, &c. from the store—see to which room I will have cleaned, and then sit down to write—lunch at one on roasted yam, and then write—much interrupted by having to see to different things till six—dress—walk in the verandah till dinner at seven." At that hour Mr. Maclean came in from the court, but till then she describes herself as never seeing a living creature but the servants. "The solitude (she writes to Mr. Blanchard) is absolute. I get up at seven o'clock, and till I see Mr. Maclean at our seven o'clock dinner, I rarely see a living creature except the servants. You may suppose what a resource writing is. * * * If my literary success does but continue, in two or three years I shall have an independence from embarrassments it is long since I have known. It will enable me completely to provide for my mother. Mr. Maclean, besides what he did in England, leaves my literary pursuits quite in my own hands, and this will enable me to do all for my family I could wish."

Previons to her departure from England she had contemplated a republication of her minor poems, selected from her favourite work, "The Drawing-room Scrap Book;" and in one of her letters to Mr. Fisher, she states, that "some of her very best poems had made their appearance there." In the volume which appeared in 1839, she observes, "For the last few years the 'Drawing-room Scrap Book' has been the cherished record of my poetical impressions, and my only poetical work; and I grew gradually to look forward to June and July, as recalling my first keen delight in composition." What she did not live to perform herself has devolved upon her friends, "The Zenana, and Minor Poems, by L. E. L., (with a Memoir, by Emma Roberts,") were republished after her decease by Mr. Fisher in 1840.

Shortly after their arrival at Cape Coast Castle in August, Mr. Maclean was taken seriously ill, in consequence of being wet through in landing through the surf, during which period Mrs. Maclean appears to have been his attentive and most indefatigable nurse. For four nights she never attempted to do more than for half an hour, when he was still with opiates, to lie down on the floor in her shawl. At one time, as he afterwards told her, he had felt sure of dying, and then his only thoughts had been what would become of her. On which occasion, looking up in his face, she touchingly answered, "And do you really think that I could survive you? Never believe it, nor take any thought about my fate, for I am sure I should not live a day after you."

Though subject to spasms, hysterical affections, and deep and instantaneous fainting fits, whilst in England,

Mrs. Maclean describes herself in her letters to her friends, as enjoying excellent health and spirits at Cape Coast Castle, with the exception of excruciating headache, and an abscess forming and breaking continually in her ear, which, indeed, had rendered her lately deaf on that side.

Previously to the fatal morning of the 15th of October, she had been for three or four nights in constant attendance on Mr. Maclean, who was indisposed, which, probably, impaired her physical strength. On the preceding day she had appeared in her usual health and spirits, though at night she was attacked with spasms, for which she took some drops. On the following morning she complained of weariness, and having risen at six o'clock, went to bed again for an hour and a half. She then rose and employed herself in writing letters to her friends, as her maid, Emily Bailey, was to sail for England in the course of the day. She saw her mistress thus occupied at that time, and observed nothing particular in her appearance or manner. Half an hour afterwards, she had a note given her for Mrs. Maclean, and on going to deliver it, she found some difficulty in opening the door, and on entering the room, she discovered her mistress lying against it, quite senseless, on the floor, with an empty bottle in her hand, labelled with the name of the medicine she was in the habit of taking. The alarm was immediately given; but, notwithstanding surgical aid was almost instantly procured, life was extinct!

An inquest was held upon the body of this lamented lady, and the surgeon's evidence very clearly proved that, in his opinion, her death was caused by the improperuse of the medicine (Prussic acid) which Mrs. Maclean

had been in the habit of taking for the spasmodic affections to which she was subject, and which she appears to have considered essential to the preservation of her life; though Mr. Maclean had occasionally threatened to take it from her. The spasms coming on, whilst in the act of taking it, Mrs. Maclean might, he stated, involuntarily have swallowed more than she intended, or the spasms themselves might have occasioned her death, before she had time to call for assistance. The body, strange to say, was not opened.

On the day following her unfortunate end, Mrs. Maclean was interred in a grave dug near the castle, and within the wall enclosing it, and a handsome marble tablet has since been sent out to Cape Coast, to be erected in the castle, with the following inscription in Latin:—

HERE LIES INTERRED
ALL THAT WAS MORTAL
OF LETITIA ELIZABETH MACLEAN.
ADORNED WITH A PURE MIND,
SINGULARLY FAVOURED BY THE MUSES,
AND DEARLY BELOVED BY ALL;
SHE WAS PREMATURELY SNATCHED AWAY BY DEATH
IN THE FLOWER OF HER AGE,
ON THE 15TH OF OCTOBER, 1838,
AGED 36 YEARS.
THE MARBLE WHICH YOU BEHOLD, O TRAVELLER,
A SORROWING HUSBAND HAS ERECTED;
VAIN EMBLEM OF HIS GRIEF.

WORKS.

The Fate of Adelaide, 1821.
The Improvisatrice, 1824.

The Troubadour, &c., 1825.
The Golden Violet, &c., 1826.
The Venetian Bracelet, &c., 1829.
Romance and Reality, 1831.
Francesca Carrara, 1834.
The Vow of the Peacock, &c., 1835.
Traits and Trials of Early Life, 1836.
Ethel Churchill, or the Two Brides, 1837.
The Zenana, &c., 1840.
Lady Ann Granard. A Novel. (Posthumous.) Nov 29, 1841.
Literary Remains of L. E. L., with Memoirs of l Life. Edited by Laman Blanchard, Esq., 2 vols.

EMMA ROBERTS.

EMMA ROBERTS was born in or about the year 1794. She was descended from a Welsh family of great respectability. Her grandfather, who was a gentleman of fortune, at one time served the office of high sheriff for Denbighshire, having formerly possessed the estate called Kenmell Park, in that county, now the property of Lord Dinorben, who purchased it at his demise. He had three sons, who all pursued a military life; and Miss Emma Roberts was daughter of William, the youngest.

After her father's decease, Emma Roberts, who was the younger of two sisters, resided with her mother, a lady of some literary pretensions, in the city of Bath, where, though it appears she was possessed of an attractive person, and was of a lively disposition, she early devoted herself to the acquisition of knowledge, and the extent of her information evinced the ardour of her application.

Whilst prosecuting her researches for her first literary performance, she evinced so much diligence and perseverance, that the officers of the British Museum,

where she was accustomed to study, attracted by the industrious exertions of the fair student, were wont to render her every assistance in their power. This work was published in two volumes, in 1827, under the title of "Memoirs of the Rival Houses of York and Lancaster, or the White and Red Roses;" and being written in a perspicuous and pleasing manner, will well repay the perusal to all those who take an interest in

> "Anjou's heroine, and the paler rose,
> The rival of her crown and of her woes."

Miss Roberts' first production does not appear to have met with that attention from the public to which, from its merits, it was entitled.

On the death of her mother, and on the marriage of her sister to Captain R. A. M'Naughten, of the Bengal army, Miss Roberts was induced to accompany Mrs. M'Naughten and her husband to India, in the February of 1828; and from Calcutta she proceeded with them to the upper provinces of the Bengal presidency, where she spent the two following years between the stations of Agra, Cawnpore, and Etawah. A spirited account of these places subsequently appeared from her pen in "The Asiatic Journal," the first description being published in the December number for 1832; and to this periodical she continued to contribute from the time of her return to England until her death. A selection of these papers appeared in 1835, under the title of "Scenes and Characteristics of Hindoostan," published by Messrs. Allen and Co., and, unlike most works upon India, it met with a favourable reception from the English public, and soon reached a second edition. The following high character of the work appeared in the

"Calcutta Literary Gazette," apparently from the pen of a writer well qualified to vouch for the fidelity of the descriptions Miss Roberts has drawn of our Indian possessions.

"Miss Roberts' book is the best of its kind. Other travellers have excelled her in depth and sagacity of remark, in extent of information, and in mere force or elegance of style; but there is a vivacity, a delicacy, and a truth, in her light sketches of all that lay immediately before her, that have never been surpassed by any book of travels that is at this moment present to our memory. She had a peculiar readiness in receiving, and a singular power of retaining, first impressions of the most minute and evanescent nature. She walked through a street or a bazaar, and everything that passed over the mirror of her mind left a clear and lasting trace. She was thus enabled, even years after a visit to a place of interest, to describe everything with the same freshness and fidelity as if she had taken notes upon the spot. They who have gone over the same ground are delighted to find, in the perusal of her pages, their own vague and half-faded impressions revived and defined by her magic glass; while the novelty and vividness of her foreign pictures make her home readers feel that they are nearly as much entitled to be called travellers as the fair authoress herself. They truly accompany her. They see with her eyes, they hear with her ears, they are present on the spot described. Her pictures bear that air of sincerity and truth which we sometimes trace in a portrait with the living original of which we are wholly unacquainted. Her readers trust her, and resign the rein of their imaginations into the author's hand."

Miss Roberts' volumes have indeed the impress of

truth upon their pages; but it is perhaps too often the plain and the painful truth, unadorned with those graces of imagination, with those poetical allusions, and historical associations, which so often invest a spot which boasts no beauty of scenery with soul-entrancing interest. If she allude to them at all, it is in a calm, dispassionate, and sensible manner; and it is but rarely she excites in the reader that vehement desire of visiting the place she describes, which frequently arises in the mind when perusing a book of travels. She vividly, indeed, depicts the discomforts which await an Anglo-India, the petty jealousies and etiquettes of Calcutta, the City of Palaces, and those of the Mofussil, or out stations; also that of home sickness, which is so often felt by the poor exiles in Oriental countries, both the cause and effect of disease, accelerating their progress to an untimely grave.

India is a country where people go to make, rather than to enjoy, a fortune; and a female, therefore, unless endowed with youth and beauty to attract, or with rank, station, or fortune, to ensure the prudence of a matrimonial connexion with her, will too often be doomed to neglect.

In describing the condition of an unmarried woman, Miss Roberts writes with a strength of feeling which seems the fruit of bitter experience.

"There cannot be a more wretched situation than that of a young woman who has been induced to follow the fortunes of a married sister, under the delusive expectation that she will exchange the privations attached to limited means in England for the far-famed luxuries of the East. The husband is usually desirous to lessen the regret of his wife at quitting her home, by per-

suading an affectionate relation to accompany her, and does not calculate beforehand the expense and inconvenience which he has entailed upon himself by the additional burthen.

" Soon after their arrival in India, the family, in all probability, have to travel to an up-country station, and here the poor girl's troubles begin; she is thrust into an outer cabin in a budgerow, or into an inner room in a tent; she makes, perhaps, a third in a buggy, and finds herself always in the way; she discovers that she is a source of continual expense; that an additional person in a family imposes the necessity of keeping several additional servants, and where there is not a close carriage she must remain a prisoner. She cannot walk out beyond the garden or the verandah, and all the out-of-door amusements, in which she may have been accustomed to indulge at home, are denied her.

" Tending flowers, that truly feminine employment, is an utter impossibility; the garden may be full of plants, (which she has only seen in their exotic state,) in all the abundance and beauty of native luxuriance, but except before the sun has risen, or after it has set, they are not to be approached; and even then, the frame is too completely enervated by the climate to admit of those little pleasing labours which render the greenhouse and the parterre so interesting. She may be condemned to a long melancholy sojourn at some out-station, offering little society, and none to her taste.

" If she should be musical, so much the worse; the hot winds have split her piano and her guitar, or the former is in a wretched condition, and there is nobody to tune it; the white ants have demolished her music-

books, and new ones are not to be had. Drawing offers a better resource, but it is often suspended for want of materials, and needlework is not suited to the climate. Her brother and sister are domestic, and do not sympathise in her *ennui;* they either see little company, or invite guests merely with a view to be quit of an incumbrance.

"If the few young men who may be at the station should not entertain matrimonial views, they will be shy of their attentions to a single woman, lest expectations should be formed which they are not inclined to fulfil. It is dangerous to hand a disengaged lady too often to table, for though no conversation may take place between the parties, the gentleman's silence is attributed to want of courage to speak, and the offer, if not forthcoming, is inferred. A determined flirt may certainly succeed in drawing a train of admirers around her; but such exhibitions are not common; and where ladies are exceedingly scarce, they are sometimes subject to very extraordinary instances of neglect. These are sufficiently frequent to be designated by a peculiar phrase; the wife or sister who may be obliged to accept a relative's arm, or walk alone, is said to be "wrecked," and perhaps an undue degree of apprehension is entertained upon the subject: a mark of rudeness of this nature reflecting more discredit upon the persons who can be guilty of it, than upon those subjected to the affront. Few young women who have accompanied their married sisters to India possess the means of returning home; however strong their dislike may be to the country, their lot is cast in it, and they must remain in a state of miserable dependence, with the danger of being left unprovided for before them, until they shall

be rescued from this distressing situation by an offer of marriage."

Miss Roberts seems to have been far better pleased with her residence at Cawnpore, one of the principal Mofussil stations on the Ganges, six hundred miles from Calcutta, than with her jungle life in the more remote cantonments of Etawah, on the river Jumna, where occasionally wolves and hyænas took the liberty of perambulating the verandahs,—porcupines haunted the gardens, panthers prowled in the ravines, and packs of jackals through the twilight might be dimly seen, like dark phantoms, on the roads.

During her residence at Cawnpore, Miss Roberts committed to the press a little volume of poetry, entitled "Oriental Scenes," which she dedicated to her friend Mrs. Maclean—then Miss Landon. It was republished in England in 1832, and contains some very pleasing specimens of glowing description and graceful imagery. It is a rare circumstance for a lady to compose and to publish in India,—perhaps almost unexampled;—but Miss Roberts has set so good an example, that it is to be hoped she may inspire other female writers to try their powers in description of eastern manners and eastern scenery.

The death of her sister, Mrs. M'Naughten, which took place in 1831, caused Miss Roberts to leave the Mofussil stations for Calcutta, the metropolis of the East; and here fresh food for observation was offered to her, and new employments presented themselves. Her pen was in continual activity, and besides various contributions to annuals and other ephemeral works, she undertook the task, (a formidable one for a female in any country, but doubly so under the sultry climate

of India,) of editing a newspaper,—" The Oriental Observer "—which was enriched by some valuable articles written by herself, indicating the versatility of her talents, and the extent of her information.

After a twelvemonth's residence in Calcutta, Miss Roberts was induced to return home, her exertions having brought with them their usual penalty in a tropical country, that of loss of health. She was, however, re-established by her voyage to England, where her reputation having preceded her, her entrance was facilitated into the literary circles of the metropolis, where her pen was again soon in frequent requisition.

The quantity of miscellaneous information which she had acquired by reading and observation, combined with her industry and fluency of composition, enabled her to perform a variety of literary labour, astonishing to those who knew that she did not seclude herself from society, but mixed in parties where her conversational powers rendered her a great acquisition, and carried on, in addition, a very extensive correspondence. Most of these compositions were occasional pieces, sometimes with, and sometimes without, her name being attached, furnished to periodicals; though some few were published separately. History, biography, poetry, tales, local descriptions, foreign correspondence, and didactic essays, by turns employed her versatile powers; and that they could be occupied in the useful, as well as the ornamental affairs and avocations of life, is evident from her having edited " The Sixty-fourth Edition of Mrs. Rundell's New System of Domestic Cookery, founded on principles of Economy, and adapted to the use of Private Families," with the addition of nearly " One Thousand New Receipts, adapted to the present ad-

vanced state of the art of Cookery," published by Mr. Murray.

In the preface, she states, "In explanation of the manner in which the present work has been brought before the public, it may be said that, excellent and admirable as Mrs. Rundell's treatise is acknowledged to be, the advanced state of culinary science has rendered her book insufficient for the guidance of the modern cook. It has, therefore, been deemed advisable, in a new edition, to retain such receipts only as will always be generally useful; and to replace those that have become obsolete, with the newer methods which obtain at the present day. The editor feels great pleasure in associating her name with one that has been so long and so widely honoured; but, unwilling to lose the credit which may be due to her own labours, she has distinguished the various new receipts, now offered to the public, by her initials—those marked E. R. being entirely of her contribution. The same principle which actuated Mrs. Rundell has been rigidly adhered to in the new edition; and, upon comparison, it will be seen that economy has been even more studiously considered, without, at the same time, losing sight of the elegance so necessary to recommend the culinary art."

A pleasing biographical sketch of Mrs. Maclean, or L. E. L., was also written by Miss Roberts, which was published with "The Zenena, and other Poems," which had previously appeared in the "Drawing-room Scrap-Book," by Mr. Fisher, in 1840. Of Miss Landon, she says, "As a companion and friend, under every mood and fancy, L. E. L. was most interesting, most delightful; a year, one of the happiest of my life, spent under the same roof with her, cemented a friendship formed long before, and which never suffered deviation or diminution.

Although, when in India, Miss Roberts evidently had felt no very great partiality for that country, yet seven years after her return to England, she formed the bold design of travelling thither through Egypt, accompanied only by a female friend; feeling, perhaps, anxious to see the alterations wrought in the social system there, by the extinction of the East India Company's commercial privileges, by steam navigation, and the overland communication, and curious to observe the progress of these changes, and to compare the India of 1830 with that of 1840.

Previous to her departure, she entered into an arrangement with the Asiatic Journal, to transmit, on her journey, a series of papers for publication in that periodical, descriptive of her route, and of "the rising Presidency," as she was wont to term Bombay. The last of these papers appeared in the same number which announced her death, and since then they have been collected and published under the title of "Notes of an Overland Journey through France and Egypt to Bombay, by the late Miss Emma Roberts."

She commences her work with observing that "A strong predilection in favour of river scenery, induced me, at the commencement of an overland journey to Bombay, through France and Egypt, to take a passage from London in a steamer bound to Havre. Accordingly, on the 1st of September, 1839, accompanied by some friends, one of whom was to perform the whole journey with me, I embarked on board the Phœnix, a French vessel, which left the Tower Stairs at about ten o'clock in the morning."

The weather prevented their seeing much of Havre on their arrival there, and they again embarked for

Rouen, where, after seeing the cathedral, she states—"Our next pilgrimage was to the statue of Joan of Arc, which we approached through narrow streets, so dirty from the late heavy rains, as to be scarcely passable. We had, as we might have expected, little to reward us except the associations connected with the Maid of Orleans and her cruel persecutors. The spot had been to me, from my earliest years, one which I had felt a wish to visit, while writing the 'Memoirs of the Rival Houses of York and Lancaster,' materially increasing the interest which an earlier perusal of the History of England and France had created, concerning scenes trodden by the brave, the great, and the good. However mistaken might have been their notions, however impolitic their actions, we cannot contemplate the characters of these Paladins, who have made Rouen famous, without feelings of respect. The murder of Joan of Arc formed the sole blot on the escutcheon of John Duke of Bedford, and the faults and vices of his companions in arms were the offspring of the times in which they lived."

This is almost a solitary instance of Miss Roberts indulging herself with retrospections of the past, which are what frequently cast so much interest over the travels of the well-informed. In general, she confines herself solely to observations on the present state of what she saw, noting down the comforts, and more particularly the annoyances, of her journey, without any bursts of poetical enthusiasm, or of romantic association. It has been observed, that "her business was with the surface of things; her skill consisted in a species of photography, presenting perfect fac-similes of objects, animate and inanimate, in their natural forms and hues."

She brings the object before us, unadorned with any of those graces of imagination which are generally to be found in the works of a female. Her writings are characterized by plain good sense, and she rarely alludes to any reminiscences or traditions of the past.

On quitting their steamer, the party started by the railroad to Paris, where, though it appears to have been her first visit to that celebrated city, only one week could be spared to visit its beauties and curiosities; and, on the 13th of September, they set out in the diligence for Lyons, from whence they proceeded by steamers to Arles and Marseilles; then they embarked on board the Megara for Malta, which place they reached on the morning of the 25th, and they embarked the same evening for Alexandria, on board the Orleans.

Alexandria was reached by the travellers on the evening of the 30th of September, where, Miss Roberts states, are now several excellent hotels for the accommodation of European travellers. At Rey's "they found every comfort they could desire;"—which is no small admission on the part of this writer, who, in general, is disposed to make but little allowance for the deficiencies generally to be experienced by all travellers in foreign countries.

Hurrying on from thence, through the kind assistance of Mr. and Mrs. Waghorn, Miss Roberts and her companion reached the port of Boulac on the 4th of October, under the care of a janissary, and entering Cairo in the night, riding on donkeys, they were soon lodged in a tolerably comfortable hotel there. But little time was allowed for seeing the multifarious objects of interest in that city and its vicinity; and in their anxiety to reach

Suez in time for the departure of the steamer, even the Pyramids, those wonders of the world, were left unvisited!

Joining a party of ladies, with a baby in arms, they soon after started on donkeys for their journey over the desert, from Cairo to Suez. Bungalows and tents, erected for the accommodation of travellers, afforded them resting-places; and caravans, or tilted carts upon springs, and even a phaeton drawn by a pair of horses, with camels for leaders, might be occasionally seen, together with various parties, hastening towards the coast, and others on their route homewards from India to Cairo.

They arrived at Suez on Wednesday, the 9th of October, where they found accommodations at Mr. Waghorn's hotel. They very shortly afterwards embarked on board the Berenice, one of the East India Company's armed steamers, where Miss Roberts appears to have been as much disconcerted with the cabin provided for her, as that very deserving class of men, the officers of the Bombay navy, are annoyed at being obliged to navigate steamers. In her excuse, it must be stated that she was attacked with fever whilst in the Red Sea; and no wonder, considering the speed with which she travelled, but the necessity for which might have been obviated, had she set off from England a month or two sooner.

On the 19th of October, the steamer reached Aden, now rising into importance under the dominion of the English, where Miss Roberts went on shore. On the evening of the 29th of October, they landed in the beautiful harbour of Bombay, having been less than two months in performing their hurried journey thither from London, which they left on the 1st of September.

Miss Roberts appears to have been greatly pleased with Bombay, which she seems to think must ultimately supersede Calcutta as the future seat of the supreme government; but, of course, it is at present very inferior in magnificence to the City of Palaces, though far surpassing it in beauty of scenery.

She met with a courteous reception from all classes; and having been previously acquainted with the then governor, Sir James Carnac, she became a guest in his hospitable mansion for some time, only quitting Parell to pay other visits, both in the Presidency and in the interior.

Miss Roberts' literary abilities were soon in requisition, and her aid was requested by the conductors of periodical works at Bombay, to which she furnished some amusing pictures of home scenes. She likewise undertook the editorship of a new weekly paper, "The Bombay United Service Gazette." She also engaged in schemes for improving the condition of the native women, by devising employment for them suited to their taste and capacity, and in her "Notes" appear some sensible remarks on native education.

These multifarious engagements in a tropical climate soon proved too much for Miss Roberts' constitution, probably already weakened by the fever which had attacked her on her overland route; and a disease of the stomach, aggravated or produced in consequence, caused her a serious attack of illness whilst on a visit to Colonel Ovans, the Resident at Sattara. She experienced every care and attention from this gentleman's family, but the complaint increasing, she removed to Poonah, in hopes of alleviating it by change of air, and, arriving at the house of her friend, Colonel Campbell, on the 16th

of September, 1840, she unexpectedly expired on the following morning, in the forty-seventh year of her age.

The remains of Miss Roberts were deposited near those of one of her own sex, also distinguished by her literary talents, and who had fallen a victim to the climate but a few years before,—Mrs. Fletcher, better known to the English world by her maiden name of Jewsbury, under which name most of her works appeared.

The death of Miss Roberts excited universal sorrow amongst all classes of society in India, whether native or European, and many flattering tributes were paid to her memory in the public journals.

WORKS.

Memoirs of the Rival Houses of York and Lancaster, 1827.

Oriental Scenes, 1832.

Scenes and Characteristics of Hindostan, 1837.

Notes of an Overland Journey to India. (Posthumous.) 1841.

THE END.

LONDON
PRINTED BY G. J. PALMER, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

00024392

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 06 February, 2016